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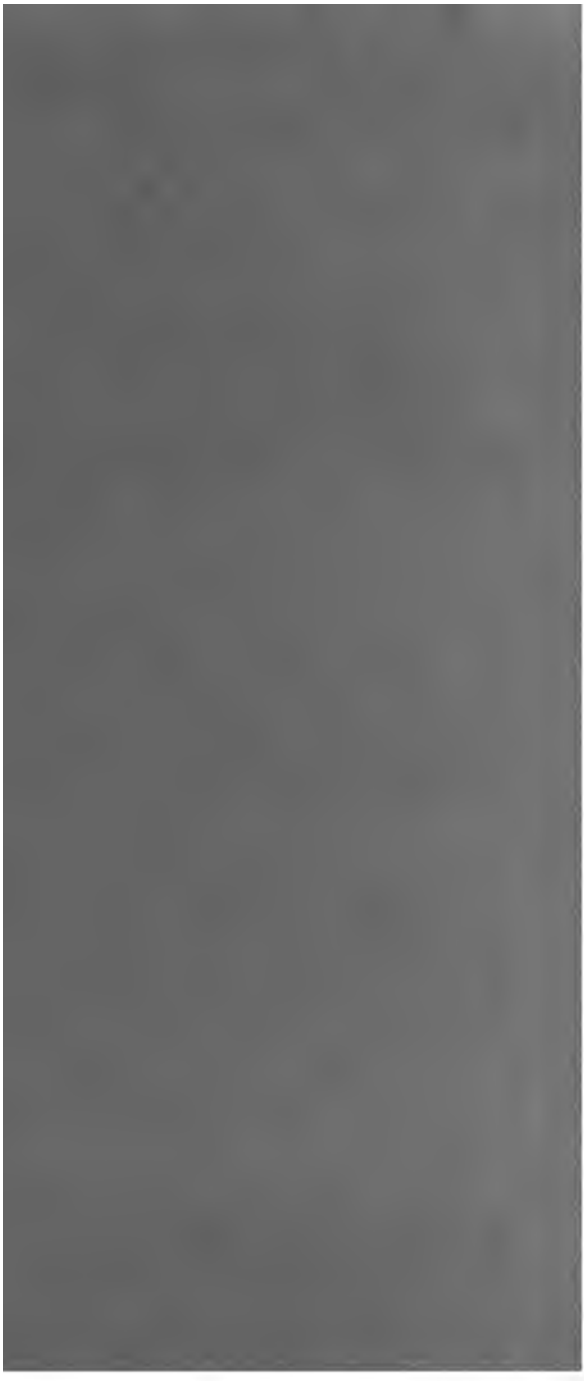

A SELECTION

FROM THE

WRITINGS

OF THE LATE

JONATHAN LAWRENCE, JUNIOR.

Stolen from hours I should have tied
To musty volumes at my side;
Given to hours that sweetly wooed
My heart from its study's solitude.

Thoughts of a Student

NEW YORK.

M DCCC XXXIII.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE publication of the following selection, from the writings of the late JONATHAN LAWRENCE, Jun., has been undertaken by the desire of many of his friends, and at the particular request of a literary association, of which he was for several years a zealous and active supporter. In preparing these remains for the press, limited as the circulation of the work will be, the Editor is conscious that he is acting contrary to what would probably have been the wish of the author, with regard to productions written during the intervals of assiduous application to the studies and duties of his profession, and with a few exceptions, not intended for the public eye. Anxious as he feels not to send forth into the world anything calculated to detract from a reputation dear to him

as his own, he cannot but be aware of the disadvantages under which this work appears without the supervision and correction of its author. It is deemed unnecessary in a publication like the present, to enter into any detailed account of a life, which, marked by few events of interest, had been passed in preparing for what promised to be a bright career of usefulness and honor. To enable the reader, however, to ascertain the age of the author at the several periods when the following pieces were written, it may be proper to state that Mr. Lawrence was born in the city of New York, November 19th, 1807, and died April 26th, 1833, before he had completed his 26th year. The language of panegyric is alike needless, for to those who knew him eulogy would be superfluous, and by those who were unacquainted with his character, it might be attributed to the influence of partial affection. The object of this publication, intended solely for the eye of friendship, will have been fully answered, if it shall sometimes recall the remembrance of one certainly not unworthy of the sympathy and regret which his early

death has called forth. The Editor would be doing injustice to his own feelings, were he to conclude these brief remarks without expressing his deep sense of the kindness of those friends who have aided him with their advice and assistance in preparing the following pages for the press.

Alcamon

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ON THE

LIFE AND CHARACTER

OF

ALGERNON SIDNEY.

ALGERNON SIDNEY.

THE Revolution, which dethroned Charles the First of England, and ultimately conducted him to the scaffold, though for a time it established in his room a sovereign equally arbitrary, may yet be justly regarded as the seed which has produced the plentiful harvest of British freedom. It opened the eyes of the nation to the slavery under which it had so long and so grievously labored; it laid the axe to that tree, which, under the name of prerogative, had been spreading its roots and branches to poison with its embraces every part of the constitution; but above all, it led to that free spirit of inquiry and discussion which combines and perpetuates all those advantages which it is the first interest and object of tyrants to crush, and of patriots to uphold; well knowing, that wherever and whenever it exists, it is the source as well as the security of freedom. "Give

me," says Milton, "the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely, according to my conscience, above all liberties." Whether there be any complete justification of the spectacle it exhibited—a monarch condemned by the voice of his own subjects to die the death of the malefactor—we are not competent to determine; but we have to blush for the absurdity of the doctrine that in our age would make his death a solemn cause of national hypocrisy. The principles of Charles were by no means such as would entitle him to the appellation of a martyr, and the errors of his education, though they may in some degree palliate his misdeeds, are not surely to confer upon him the crown of the saint, who, having endured and suffered all things in a holy cause, has finished a life of faith by a death of glory. Who that can think for a moment of Stephen or of Paul, would be willing to tarnish the dignity of martyrdom, and the brightness of the martyr, by a comparison that is at once unjust and insulting. He had talents, in truth, that might have adorned even his high station; virtues, which in private life would have made him an invaluable citizen: but as a king, as the ruler of a people jealous of their freedom, he was dangerous both from disposition and ability; and whatever may be said of his character, we are content for our part, as we are willing, to acknowledge in every trait of it the wisdom of that providence which gave our

forefathers a monarch who, "neither to be instructed by experience, nor persuaded by argument," compelled them to appeal, as victoriously and triumphantly they did, to the rights of man, and to the God of battles. Irritated by the conduct of the sovereign, and anxious to assert the rights he had withholden, the people of England were again arrayed in civil combat, and in the only cause that can vindicate such a scene—the cause that involved their own and their children's happiness. "The man," says Horne Tooke, "must be hard-hearted indeed, who does not let fall a tear for every drop of blood shed in such a struggle, however just the quarrel;" but we do think that our tears in such a cause as theirs, would be lighted up by the consciousness of duty if unfortunate; or if successful, by the proud and pure exultation that should arise from such a victory, however dearly bought. In the struggle that convulsed England at this time, there was hardly a middle course for him who felt for the interests of his country, and accordingly we soon find among the leaders of the people, the proudly eminent name of Algernon Sidney.

His family is one of the most illustrious in the records of English history. Wit, valor, and generous feeling seem to have descended with the name from generation to generation; and beauty, can we forget beauty, was theirs. The true knight bore proudly his lady's favors in the bannered lists, and felt his

every effort doubly paid by a smile or a look from "those bright eyes that rained their influence, and adjudged the prize;" while the deeds of their sons were the theme of many a song, the envy of many a gallant knight, the secret pride and admiration of many a beautiful bosom. The name of Sir Philip needs only mention to awaken the finest recollections. His were the "high thoughts seated in a heart of courtesy" that encircled his age and memory with the last and loveliest laurels of his beloved chivalry, and the spirit of that chivalry, the spirit that knew not fear or reproach as it animated his living actions, drooped and died upon his tomb. The lustre that seemed for a while to live after him, was only the sad and faint reflection of his glory, like the glowing rays that linger upon some clear sunset, and are soon to follow it in its departure. Yes; he was the last of those fair spirits who were bravest and brightest in battle and bower, whose deeds gave to knighthood all its renown, and whose passionate fidelity bestowed upon woman her noblest prerogatives; who united the warrior and the bard in a rare and beautiful union, whose whole life in fine, in the language of Campbell, "was poetry put into action." Their days are gone; but we love to linger with them and amid their remembrances. They are the luxuriant spots in the dull waste of the chronicles, the fairy land of memory in which "the dreaming boy" roves and

revels until visions of fair forms and bright eyes, of knight and lady, of Sidney and of Geraldine, are with him, around him, and before him.

Such were Algernon Sidney's forefathers, and the son of such sires, the scion of such a stock, was an honor to his origin. What though it was not his to dally with, or battle for a "ladye love;" what though it was not his to have his name "married to immortal verse;" his calling was nobler and more exalted; and with a patriotism as strong and a soul as gallant as the best of his ancestors, he prepared to obey it, to follow it "through evil and good," to glorify it in life and in death. The cause he had espoused had now become the darling of his affections. His talents, the rank he had put to hazard, but above all, that firm, unshaken integrity that awes the boldest, and animates in the worst of times to deeds of almost incredible success; these united qualities gave him an influence and an independence which few possessed, and few dared to exercise during the ascendency of Cromwell. But Sidney was neither to be the slave of a party, or the tool of an intrigue. So long as the future Protector acted for the common weal, Sidney was by his side; so long as he defended the rights his countrymen had risen to defend, he found in Sidney a brave heart, and a willing arm; but, beyond this, he would not go; this was the point in which centred all his hopes, all his exertions; this was with

him the line "quam ultra citraque nequit consistere rectum." From this time forth his course was plain, and bold, and open. He was above disguise, and he scorned all fear. His opposition to the schemes of the usurper, so long as it could be effectual, was warm and ardent; but he who "wielded at his will the fierce democracy of England," was not to be thus impeded, and obtained in the eventual defeat of Sidney, a signal triumph over public and private virtue. Wiser than the Roman, warned by his folly and his example, Cromwell had seized with the authority upon something of the "pride and circumstance" of royalty, while his substantial greatness was rapidly increasing with the spread of British commerce, and the success of his naval and military enterprises. Further opposition, therefore, would have been a species of heroic insanity, which we may admire but cannot pardon in him who should have reserved himself for better days. In this situation, Sidney retired to mourn in secret over the prostration of his hopes and the prospects of the people, and we may conjecture that he devoted this retirement to that record of his opinions, which he has left as a valuable legacy to posterity.

His maxims of political truth were regarded by his contemporaries as the daring and singular tenets of a visionary, though they are now neglected as the common place elements, the very axioms of the

science of free governments. Such are the effects of proceeding time. That which is to us an almost tangible reality, was enveloped to his view in clouds and shadows; that which he saw as "through a glass darkly," is displayed to us in the full power and light of day. We have seen the almost poetry of Milton confirmed into prophecy. We have seen a "nation rising like a strong man after his sleep, and shaking his invincible locks"—we have seen her throwing away her shackles and prejudices, the dimness and the indolence of slumber, to secure to her children, in a long continued line, we trust, of worthy descendants, the blessings of a freedom bounded only by the natural imperfections of man. If they could have seen this:—If they could have seen their offspring, proud are we of the name! founding in another and distant world an empire, whose extent none have ascertained, and whose future greatness it is beyond the power of the human mind to calculate, and that empire "free, sovereign, and independent," well might they have exclaimed in the spirit of the saint, in the language so beautifully quoted by Sidney, on a similar occasion, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servants depart in peace, for our eyes have seen thy salvation." But to them such revelations were dark; they resembled the types and shadows of the Jewish hierarchy, whose interpretation, indistinctly seen by the patriarchs and prophets

of old, became gradually visible, until they met on the cross like the lines of a circle in its centre, so that now the Christian is enabled to walk in the light of their fulfilment, and in the freedom of the sons of God. Such, too, has been, and we trust will forever be, the march of liberal political principles, until in the fulness of time, the ends of the earth, enlightened, redeemed, and regenerated by their influence, shall glory in equal privileges; until the Greek shall again crown the bowl of Liberty upon the soil, and beneath the sky of his forefathers; until our southern continents shall present with us an innumerable people, free, united, and happy; until the Spaniard shall be permitted to hallow the memory of Riego, and the Russian shall blush for the ignominy of his servile fathers; until, in fine, all nations, of every climate, color, and description, shall worship with one accord at the altar of the same freedom.

To return—the death of the Lord Protector opens to our view another and different era. Whatever may be said of his moral character, Oliver Cromwell was without doubt the greatest statesman that ever wielded the destinies and the sceptre of England. Without eloquence, I had almost said, without the powers of speech, he won the affections of the people, corrupted the integrity of parliament, and finally, subverted a form of government that had lasted unshaken for centuries. His success, in a time when

one mistake would have ruined his fortunes, is the true test of his unequalled abilities. He wanted but little of that vaulting ambition which led Bonaparte to his rock, and would have led him by the same process to the scaffold. It is worthy also of our observation and regret, that one step only would have been required to have made him the founder of a great republic, and the idol of succeeding generations. The crown he had worn descended to his son; but the son inherited not the mantle of his father: the fires that had slumbered under the strong hand now burst forth with redoubled violence, and without energy to subdue, or address to conciliate, he resigned his royal dignity, to seek the happiness it could not afford.

The people, wearied out with dissensions, were determined to procure repose, even at the hazard of restoring the kingly authority; and with a prospect as bright as ever opened on the eyes of any prince, hailed with joy and gladness as the hope of the nation, the second Charles ascended the throne of his fathers. Educated in the French court, a libertine by profession as well as disposition, he caused the chaste cheek to blush for his open outrages of all that had been esteemed honorable or virtuous, and made the heart of every true Englishman burn within him, at this base pollution of the throne once occupied by Alfred and by the Edwards. It would

have been well for him if he had inherited the piety of his parent; but he had every vice and wickedness of youth, without one of his father's redeeming virtues; and we are compelled to declare, that we find in his character nothing to check our disgust, or to soften our abhorrence. It was a waste, a barren waste, "in which no verdure quickened, and no kindly plant took root." Upon his accession, England was no longer safe for those whose activity or abilities had given them distinction in the previous troubles, and accordingly, Algernon Sidney departed to await in exile an honorable return, and to hope for brighter prospects in his native land. But even here, surrounded by courtiers and enemies, he displayed the same loftiness of feeling, the same fearlessness of danger. Well might the tyrant tremble before him who had recorded in the face of the world as his chosen motto, "Hæc manus inimica tyrannis ense petit placidam sub libertate quietem." But the time was fast approaching when his enemies were to satisfy their vengeance with his blood. Encouraged by some faint hopes of security at home, he returned to England and to his death. The spectacle that met his view was not to be supported. The nation rapidly giving way to the strides of prerogative, and the parliament seconding every blow against their constituents, and glorying in their treason, were sights that stung him to the quick. He

could not see the righteous perish, and not lift up his voice against the foul crime: he could not behold his countrymen oppressed and trampled on without a struggle, and he was ready to bare his arm for their redemption, and against the tyrant. From this moment, from the moment in which he offered any obstacle to the strides of the court, his doom was determined on. He was hunted and dogged in daylight and darkness, his servants were traitors to his interests, and his house was no longer a refuge. There are means to accomplish any end however detestable, and he was soon committed. His trial was a mockery of justice: perjury against him was a virtue, and the false witness retired from his seat to receive the reward of his labors. There were some, indeed, bold enough to protest against such conduct, and to present to the mercy-seat, alas, how miscalled! their petitions for redress. But it would in truth have savored of madness to have expected either justice or mercy where the judge was Jeffries and the sovereign was Charles. Amiable association! The libertine king, and the infamous servant, were fit and happy companions. "In their lives they were lovely, and even after death they shall not be divided;" the records of history shall do them most substantial justice, and the names of the real judge and executioner, of Charles and of Jeffries, shall descend to posterity together. Sidney died upon the scaffold; but the

scaffold's ignominy (terrors for him it could not have,) was a word unknown. Consecrated by the blood of nobles and patriots, its boards had become holy ground, and he but added his name to the long list of those who were too firm to be slaves, and too fearless to be silent. He has added his name to theirs too, in their triumphant justification. Though the writers of a day, the minions and mercenaries of a party, endeavored to fasten upon him their obloquy, and to sully that reputation, which, dearer to him than his existence, has "embalmed and treasured up" his memory "to a life beyond life," with Russel and Hampden, he has come purer than gold refined from the seven times heated furnace of his persecution; and as long as virtue, valor, and wisdom, shall be respected among men, he will illustrate with them the beautiful moral of the poet,

> Truth, tho' it troubles some minds,
> Some wicked minds, that are both dark and dangerous,
> Yet it preserves itself, comes off pure, innocent,
> And like the sun, tho' never so eclipsed,
> *Must* break in glory.

Above all, it becomes our country to cherish and to reverence his name. The principles that have given us a rank among the nations, that have bestowed upon us our various details of security and happiness, founded on the broad basis of equal law and justice, and comprehending the free enjoyment of life, liberty,

and property; the principles that have made us what we now are, and will make us whatever we shall be, he loved, he lived, and died for. It were idle to tell you of their influence. You behold and feel it in every step you take, in every object that meets your view. Ours is not that phantom liberty, that licentiousness, which incited the French Revolutionists to deeds of rapine and murder only to mock them by its departure; but that bounded and chartered liberty, which, resting for its preservation on the happiness it secures, can never be lost, while men are worthy of its enjoyment.

Let it be our care, then, to protect it; and if ever the time should come, when oppression, foreign or domestic, in any shape or disguise whatever, shall seek to weaken it, or to wrest it from us, let us unite with one heart and one voice "to crush the tyrant while we rend the chain;" and in the glorious language inscribed upon the tomb of one of Sidney's noblest compatriots, let us "never, never forget, that opposition to tyrants is obedience to God."

M DCCC XXVI.

DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

No. I.

MILTON AND SHAKSPEARE.

> "Who is this,
> That with warm veins, and limbs and features fresh
> With the sun's life, comes to inhabit with
> The hidden dead?"

Milton. Yes! but it was the deed of the people of England. The factious tumult of a violent and turbulent mob, without perceivable aim or purpose, such as we have known in the old times, was not the scene displayed in that awful and bloody theatre; nor by the hands of a few banded swordsmen, without character or provoking cause, did the man, Charles Stuart, meet his righteous and just death. It was the calm and settled doom decreed him by those, upon whom he and his butterfly minions had trampled, and whose unsleeping resentment his long and unstinted oppressions had kindled.

Shakspeare. But I tell thee, John Milton, the people of England were not rightfully nor lawfully

acting, to rise up in armed rebellion against their throned sovereign; him on whom the priests of God's holy altar had poured the oil of their consecration.

Milton. And I tell thee, thou art talking in the foolish and bold style of the haughty Tudors: of that lustful king, whose marriage bed was defiled with divorces and stained with murders; of that Mary, whose blazing faggots, fired to consume the saints, seemed almost to rival the light of the sun in heaven; of that strong-handed Elizabeth, the virgin queen as ye called her, to whom your own verses, William Shakspeare, gave an unworthy fame, an immortality, which she deserved not.

Shakspeare. Now, by heavens! I will not and cannot bear it: she was my most royal and loving mistress, and thou shalt not slander her memory. Did she not, woman as she was, but with manly soul, raise such a spirit as would have crushed the proud Spaniard, if he had set foot on our sea-girt island? Did she not, by her wise counsels, put to flight that fleet, that armada, which the pride of the Dons called invincible? For shame! John Milton—she was the friend and patron of poets—for shame!

Milton. She was the friend and patron of poets, sayest thou? In what manner she befriended them, I know not, unless your starving poets be false, and honest poverty tells no lies. The splendid Spenser, whose Belphœbe thou knowest she was, tells not much

of her bounty; and if fame be not an arrant liar, even thou thyself, William Shakspeare, hadst no sufficient reward of thy praises, unless empty smiles, and worthless favors, could purchase house and raiment; but thou art wandering from the point. Nero was the friend of poets. I reproach thy loving mistress, as thou callest her, for upholding those proud and blasphemous doctrines of divine princely right, which her unhappy descendant, by supporting, hath lost both sovereignty and life; and I upbraid thee for approving such doctrines. If the eagle can soar to the sun, he must needs see the spots on its surface.

Shakspeare. Aye, but what if there be no spots to see? and if there be, I am no eagle to soar to him. Bandy me no compliments; they are the counters with which keen men win fools money; but if thou wilt reason, I will talk to thee. Answer me then, John Milton; was not the government of England a noble and free government, limited and checked, and yet strengthened by the strength of a wise and virtuous monarch, honored and graced by the spirit-stirring memories of her ancient and brave barons, and healthy and vigorous in the independence of her proud peasant yeomanry?

Milton. I tell thee again, William, thou art jeering and trifling with me; truly, the government of England was checked by the strength of the monarch, which I would the rather, and more reasonably

call an overweening despotism; and for the enduring influence of your time-honored nobility, (honored in no other way that I wot of,) were they not court flatterers, and brawlers, and revellers, like Leicester and Essex, living in the false smiles of a weak headed woman, when they should have been foremost in opposing the avaricious greediness of her prerogatives? or like those swash-bucklers, their followers, drabbing and dicing at gambling houses and brothels, shorn of their strength by enticing Dalilahs, when they should have been in the field, breaking in sunder the chains of the people? And as to your proud peasantry! What were their representatives—so called, I fear me, in jest—what these commons of England, but slaves and parasites; to whom your queen gave a bone when they fawned, and a buffet when they bit; cowardly dogs, who shrunk from her hand, and slunk from her presence! I would that thou hadst lived in our times!

Shakspeare. And I would not, that I had lived to see the royalty of our Alfreds, and Henrys, and Edwards, prostrated, and the temple of God levelled before a rabble of low-born men. If these be the happy times ye prate of, when kingly blood was spilt like stagnant pool water, and priests' mitres cleft by the hand of damned faction, I care not to have seen them; nay, I am more than content to have lived

under the peaceful and pure reign of good queen Bess, the lion heart of England.

Milton. Then live upon that, thy fair memory. I envy thee not. For my poor self, I rejoice that my lot was cast in better and freer days, when kings, who misgoverned, found not a protection in their tinsel trappings, and men who presumed to wield the fiery indignation and cleaving curse of God against the unshackling of consciences, priests of Bel and the Dragon, that unholy union of church and state, which the inspired power of our Daniel hath rent in sunder, and laid bare to shame and scorn; when these men, I say, have been torn from their fat livings and riotous merriment, their stalls of lust and bigotry; and as for that rabble of which thou talkest, I tell thee once again it was no rabble: it was a whole people, a whole nation, rising up with one accord to smite the persecuting Pharaoh, amid his purple and guards, not only with prayers and offerings, but with the arms with which God himself had armed them. Had he not enforced, (answer me this,) had he not enforced many of our best and bravest to flee from his tyranny into the strange lands beyond the waters? Is not many a hearth-stone cold, that should be warm with the fires and hospitality of merry England, while they, who in by-gone days sat around it, are wandering in the cold, and roofless, and shelterless wilderness? Hath he not outraged our

rights and laws, and the hard-won charters of our liberties contemptuously set at nought? and should his pride of place, as thou thyself hast called it, protect him from the vengeance of a trampled people? I tell thee, William Shakspeare, the blood of Charles Stuart, the tyrant, shall fatten the fields of England. Its crops shall not be armed men, as in the old fable we read of, but a harvest of glorious principles; and our posterity shall look back to us, and bless us, for that we have not submitted to wear the chains with which he would have fettered our frames, and them through us. But thou wilt not listen to me; go to, then, enjoy thy dreams of fiction and the remembrance of thy revels with the ungodly; for me, I offer my morning and evening and unceasing thanks to Him, for his gift of power and strength to refute their sophistries, and tear in pieces, and scatter to the free winds under the firmament, the cobwebs of the hired crew who would pull down the strong defences of our righteous cause, and restore the young wolf to batten himself, and to redden his jaws in the blood of the innocent and the righteous.

M DCCC XXVI.

DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

No. II.

CHARLES II. AND COWPER.

Cowper. But posterity, your majesty, gives your reign little credit for virtue or wit. They say that you were abandoned; caring little for God's law, or the law which yourselves had made.

Charles. Little credit for virtue, saidst thou? Why we were anchorites by the side of France, with her eternal revellings and bare licentiousness, her maskings and mistresses! We did but imitate her gayeties, and even those at an humble distance.

Cowper. Yes! and for this imitation they censure you. They say that you and your courtiers corrupted the bold spirit of our English Barons, to make them supple Frenchmen and effeminate flatterers. That the quick and manly honor, which would have found favor in the eyes of our old princes, our Harrys and Edwards, yielded with thee to fawning and profaning baseness; and that thou thyself, thou, Charles of England, became a pensioner of France, of

that France whose fields were red with the victorious blood of their ancestors and thine! Was this foul charge true?

Charles. Have they gone so deep into kingly secrets? But it was true, too true. Yet they should remember, that the resources of our kingdom were weakened, and that we needed money to support our state and government. It was to prevent the burdens of taxation.

Cowper. What! take bribes from France because England was poor—and to support thy government! History says it was to supply thy pleasures, and to provide for court mummeries. And because England was poor?—for shame! I had rather it had been told that Englishmen were beggars, than that their sovereign should wear the collar of a descendent of St. Louis: their prince be the pander of foreign France! I blush for thee and my country; for was there ever a time, tell me, when England was too poor to pour out her heart's blood for her wise laws, her pure religion, her natural throne? But what say you for your licentiousness and courtly adulteries? What of the marriage bed profaned with impunity, aye, and with praise, and all by thine own example?

Charles. Pshaw, man! Why I tell thee our days were glorious and peaceful days—rebellion was punished and loyalty rewarded.

Cowper. Aye; the rebellion of Sidney and the

loyalty of Jeffries! Charles Stuart, the blood of that man cries from the scaffold against thee! It was awfully avenged on thine infamous minister.

Charles. Avenged, saidst thou? My vengeance was but slight on him who leagued with Cromwell and Bradshaw to murder my father, and then shrunk from his blood; who retired to the groves of Penshurst, given to his ancestors by my ancestors, that he might not look upon the innocent victim. Why did he not gather some of the spirit of his sires from the old oaks which, until then, had never shaded treason or traitor? Why did he not come out, and cry against the deed on hill and house-top, in palace or prison? Was he to be visited in mercy?

Cowper. Nay; but it would have been madness. Thou thyself mightest as well have rushed upon Cromwell in his "pride of place," among his puritans and guardsmen, instead of crouching in disguise with thy father's friends, and waiting for occasion. And I warrant you, the old fox would have received you with open jaws! But thou saidst thy days were glorious and peaceful days.

Charles. Aye! and say it still. Was not England called merry England in my days, and was I not its merry monarch? It is true, I did not pray and fast in public to blaspheme and banquet in private, as did the regicide hypocrites. And besides, the people had been kept so long in sackcloth and ashes

by those canting roundheads, that they called for some relaxation, for diversions and amusements.

Cowper. Diversions and amusements, sayest thou; and peaceful and merry? There was a time when the war-cry of St. George for merry England would have been hushed on the battle-field, if such merriment as thou talkest of had stained the escutcheons of our nobles, soiled the ermine of Justice, and disgraced the princely sceptre: days, when amusement and diversion did not stand in our clear language for blasphemy and shamelessness. Well may we blush for thy reign, for prince and people; and on thee must the accusation rest. When they who sit in high places are open wassailers and unjust slaves, what think you must the subjects be? How can the low lands but be overflowed when the torrent rushes from the mountain? Your father was at least pious and moral.

Charles. Aye, and was beheaded for his piety and morality, and his son was ever determined to shun his fate. But I will bear no longer thy reproaches and rebukes.

Cowper. Well, then, let us change the subject. Posterity says ye were low in wit as ye were high in vice; and that ye did not even redeem your degradation in morals by your splendor in genius, which sometimes, like the exhalation from a marsh, throws a lustre around corruption. Do they say true?

Charles. Why, I do not think we were overstocked with philosophers; but we had some singing-birds. I bethink me now, there was the sweet and melancholy Cowley, and my own frolicksome friend, Rochester: a little wild perhaps, but a jovial fellow; and Tom D'Urfey; a merrier bard never trolled ballad, nor poured off bumper. His songs were exquisite; the very darlings of true cavaliers. There was Buckingham, too, mine own counsellor; and there was Lovelace and his Althea. Love was his element: he was a gallant and a loyal knight!

Cowper. And was there none other? Cowley, I grant you, was musical in his melancholy: somewhat conceited; but he had the true English vein in him at times. And Dryden: hast thou forgotten him with his majestic march of verse? Rochester was a pest and a disgrace, Buckingham and Tom D'Urfey are forgotten, "requiescant in pace;" but think! was there not one more?

Charles. Not one more! What or whom mean you?

Cowper. Was there not one Milton, one John Milton?

Charles. Aye, some did say he was a goodly poet, that same writing roundhead: who was worse than Cromwell, the arch-fiend himself; for the Protector, as they called him, fought openly and boldly, but this rhymer was better pleased with his safe closet for

a field, his beggarly books for soldiers, and his false pen for a sword. Cromwell could only touch my father's body; but he, this lurking assassin, wounded his fair fame. But in our time he was done with his tractates; and his manifestoes and answers were thrown to the dogs; and his verses, by the side of my gay Rochester's, were like the pipings of Marsyas to the divine reed of Apollo. Aye; my noble Rochester! he was your man for a pretty girl or a drinking bout! and yet he handled the pen well too. Why, I tell you, Milton was but a chirping grasshopper to him.

Cowper. Milton a chirping grasshopper to Rochester! Why, he is the prince of poetry; and the verse of your age is identified with his name. He divides the palm with Shakspeare; and Rochester is forgotten when Milton is mentioned.

Charles. Ods fish, man! why thou art running on finely! What, John Milton; the psalm-singing independent, the lying secretary, the blind proser!

Cowper. Aye, wonder as you will, and jeer as you will. That blind John Milton was a very sundaring eagle in the firmament of English genius. He is the glory of England, and the pride, aye, and the disgrace of your own reign. I tell you again, he is a twin prince with the immortal of Avon. Ye thought, indeed, that he was mad, when he told you of his destined immortality; and ye said that he was

overpaid with the paltry ten pounds, which your booksellers gave him; but he knew better, and the fame he prophesied is ignominy to the fame he possesses; and the ten pounds multiplied by tens of thousands, would never repay, if dross could, the price of his labors! He was blind, say ye? but he saw farther than the clearest sighted of you, for he saw, through the mists of obloquy and disgrace, the light of his glory. He was poor, say ye? but he is richer than the proudest of ye, in the fair memories of men. He was a psalm-singing independent, say ye? but the music of his pure and holy devotion shall die not but with our language. But I grow wanton in his praise. I tell ye, then, for all, that the blind beggar, the rhyming secretary, and the psalm-singing independent, is remembered as the second father of English poetry, and not the least honorable or honored of English patriots.

M DCCC XXVI.

A DREAM.

A DREAM.

I AM a dreamer. The visions of the night have power over me—terrible and magical power. Sleep, that gives to the worn and weary of this world an elysium of fairy sights and unreal enjoyments, or better still, the "sober certainty" of repose, plunges me into scenes of the wildest and busiest commotion: into the most inaccessible haunts, where the light of the glorious sun would seem to have striven with the spirits of darkness, and to have yielded in the strife: through the dungeons of the inquisition, poisoned and foul with the venomed breathing of its brute inhabitants, or sad and sorrowful with the recorded griefs of those who have made friends of fetters: amid the moving mountains of the great deep, with its silent tales of "tall and richly freighted argosies," of forms of manly beauty, and hearts of manly pride and power! Such are the scenes to which I am transported, to realize in

fancy the agonies which reality has inspired. Never, never, after all that I have seen and acted, can I deny the influence of the imagination upon its covering of clay, even unto the pangs of death. I can believe on this point almost beyond the bounds of credibility and credulity, from the observation of this influence upon myself. While others are laughing at the stories founded upon it as the excited efforts of the imagination, I too can laugh at those who would limit or define the faculties which God hath wisely appointed to be mysteries unto us, but which, in his hands, are controlled to advance his inscrutable purposes. I have seen those, who scouted the idea that such "things should overcome us like a summer cloud," staggered and confounded by facts, which could not be questioned without a declaration of scepticism with regard to any and all human evidence. Reason becomes ridiculous when it is applied to test this wonderful influence. But to my dream. It is the last and most distinct. Every thought, every hope, every "fear that kindled hope," every longing and disappointment, are living and burning within me! The hot tear, the hurried grasp, the long struggle, the last bubbling cry, that told the end of the combat, all "run molten still in memory's mould," in clear, and strong, and imperishable impressions. It is on this account I relate it. Many may have had such dreams, but in few, perhaps,

have they been so luminously, so indelibly stamped. As I write, I shudder at the recollection. You may have imagined from my expressions that it was at sea. It was so. Our vessel was large and strong; her sails were bellying to the breeze; all was fair above, around, beneath; the long blue waves sunk gently under her hull as she leaped and pranced upon their backs. It was the hour of evening. None but those who have been on the ocean can conceive the glories of that hour. The broad red disk of the sun, dipping and burying, and covered, in the farthest wave that mingles with the horizon; the mellow and trembling radiance that streams upon the top of each billow; the splendid tints reflected in the light clouds which are gathered around, as if to witness the death scene of departing majesty—I could almost have sworn that Byron's lines were written there in that spot, as I uttered with the fervency of a long forgotten devotion:

> "Ave Maria! over earth and sea,
> This heavenliest hour of heaven is worthiest thee."

It was evening—yet a few moments, and the shadows on the waves grew darker and darker: the sails looked in the growing obscurity like the white wings of some vast sea bird hurrying to her nest, until at length all was lost in undistinguishable blackness: and it was night. "A change came o'er

the spirit of my dream." There were hurrying and trampling of feet, and oaths mingled with the voice of command. The canvass was in ribands, and now and then by the lightning we could discover its fragments, torn and white, among the irregular waves. The timbers creaked. The water through which our ship was flying, rose along her sides in mingled flame and foam, and looked when the sudden gleam lightened over it like the hot flanks of the gallant steed. Among the men there was no muttering, no sound, no sign of cowardice. The flash which showed the face of a seaman showed the face of a hero. They looked like men who knew their doom was come: that to repine was folly, to resist was impossible. They clung indeed to the rigging, but it was with the convulsive grasp that marks the predominancy of natural instinct over the firmest resolutions, and the most fearless spirit. One by one they were swept away—not a groan, not a sound was heard; but after the rush of each wave, the question that hastily uttered remained unanswered, told eloquently and sadly, that "another unit was withdrawn from the sum of human existence." As for myself, I had hopes—I clung to my hold benumbed and wearied. The gray and sullen morning dawned. Yesterday it dawned on many a stout form, and warm heart—the strength of the one had been useless, the warmth of the other was

cold for ever. I looked in every direction to discern a sail. Nothing was to be seen, but the billows heaving and swelling, as the wrestler pants after a desperate conflict. The vessel was sinking slowly but surely. I dragged myself by strong efforts to the top. Here was the last plank that separated me from the devouring element. The water rose gradually. I gazed eagerly till all sight seemed to be lost. I felt the water as it touched my foot. It rose. It was up to my neck. I loosed my hold with a shriek. I rose and sunk, and rose and sunk again. I felt the water bubbling from my mouth. I sunk down, down, down among hideous forms. There were the whale, and the kraken, and the dolphin. I knew by the blackness I had reached the bottom. I felt around. There was a voice calling to me. It called me once, twice, and again; and I awoke to hear the awful sound that summoned me to breakfast!

ON THE POETRY OF BURNS.

ON THE POETRY OF BURNS.

THE people of Scotland have always been famed for the sweetness and variety of their music and song. The causes of this reputation, may, we think, be easily traced in the circumstances which attend their lives, and form their habits. We believe it is now pretty well settled, since the time of Montesquieu, that the influence of climate and country on the character, is extremely great. The gayety and light-heartedness of the French peasant, may easily be attributed to the productiveness of his soil, and the kindly beauty of his sky; the luxurious indolence of the east, to its enervating breezes and "lazy pacing clouds"; the proud and haughty freedom of the English, to their insulated situation, and their melancholy but generous feeling to their clouded heavens, and the wilder independence of the Scotch and Swiss, together with their more

moderate excitement and saving prudence to their mountainous and barren hills and heaths. It is this last cause of Scotch peculiarity which leads us back to the subject of our essay, the poetry of Scotland, and chiefly of Burns. It is this very face of its country, which makes Scotland the land of song. It is this, which led to the sub-division into feuds and clans, which in their turn produced martial feeling and limited communion among themselves, the sources of those strains which express and echo in every note the strength of their attachments and their enmities. Every mountain peak, every valley and cave and loch, were known from childhood to the dwellers in their recesses, and were familiar to their imaginations, as the abodes of unearthly spirits, or mingled in their memory with some wild and wondrous deed. To this fact, we may refer for the love of locality which characterizes their songs. They abound in allusions to peculiar battle-fields and trysting knowes. The hero of their verse combats amid scenes which yet echo to the gathering cry, or to the victorious lay, or to the lament for the gallant dead; or breathes his tale on the rock or in the valley which is consecrated to some gentle recollection, and has been the haunt of plighted faiths and simple loves for centuries. The sub-divisions of which we have spoken, led them to such an intimate connection with each other, that when there was no

monstrous example of oppression, a clan resembled a large family closely knit together by mutual interest and affection, and all looking up to their chief with reverence and duty. Him they were bound to follow to battle, for him they were to risk and sacrifice life, and fame, and wealth; and his wrongs they resented, and his joys they shared with the quick love of children. And in return, he was to protect their families and provide for their support, to decide their quarrels, and sanction their unions; and to be in word and in deed the nursing parent of his vassals. Here then are a thousand subjects for minstrelsy, and these furnished many a ballad and many an air of singular beauty and power, which yet live warmly in the memory of Scotland, and proudly in the music of the world. But previous to the time of Burns, many of the airs were adapted to Gælic words, whose fame was limited to a clan or a district. Besides, many, even of those songs which had not been sung to the mountain language, possessed the peculiar allusions we have mentioned, which although giving to them a deep interest to the peasantry of the land, rendered them flat and barren to strangers. Thus we shall find, even now, that an air which still preserves its original thoughts and words in parts of Scotland, is clothed in other parts, or in other countries, in an entirely different dress. Moreover, although there were many names

connected with the authorship of these songs, they were imperfectly preserved by rude tradition, or limited in their obscure reputation; there was yet no poet who could be called emphatically the bard of Scotland. At length, in Robert Burns arose one who might justly claim that appellation, who born from the people, was the poet of the people; who gave to their music songs which being nature itself, were fitted to find an answering chord in every heart, and whose fame not seen darkly through the mist of years, will be immortal as the hills of Albyn, and not confined to them, the property and pride of the universe. Burns was descended from humble parents of scanty means, and little education or knowledge. His first essays in verse were made at the handle of the plough, and though rough of course, and unclassical, displayed deep power of language and strength of feeling. His life and its incidents, it is not necessary to mention. He lived and died poor in pecuniary matters. His haughty spirit of independence made him often reckless of his true interests, and disgusted sincere and long suffering friends; while his careless extravagance would have kept him in poverty, if he had inherited immense wealth. But we are not to try or judge a mind and heart like his, by the rules of worldly prudence. His thoughts and impulses were the same; his heart and mind, right or wrong, were never

separate. He could not reason coldly on a subject, for he acted without reasoning. Wherever his feelings prompted, his arguments followed; and are we to sit in judgment on the creature of impulse and circumstance, and expect to find his every action regulated by the common caution of every day minds? If we are to do this, we must, in justice, consent to forfeit the delights of song, the raptures of genius, the extended reachings of superior intellects; we must lose the fancy of Collins, the promise of Chatterton, the English sweetness of Goldsmith, the splendid blazing touches of Byron, the image of nature and beauty in Burns. I look upon these men, as God has made them, foolish, even beyond human folly, but wise almost with the wisdom of the Deity. I recognize in them, the remains of that earlier man who stood upon the subject earth, and yet held converse with Seraphim and Cherubim; but only the remains, for even while I worship the splendid ruins, I lament the wreck and symbols of the fall.

But our business at present is with the poetry of Burns, and to that we shall return. He was, we have said, the poet of the people. The Scotch have, perhaps, a stronger national character than any other people, and this character pervades the whole country. The poet of one part of the land, and especially such an one as Burns, imbued with all

their prejudices, and clothing their prevailing passions with the magic of his verse, soon became the idol of Scotland. Next to Shakspeare, I do not know a man whose reputation is so enviable as that of Burns. His songs are known and sung where printing could not reach, or would not be of use. Every farm and cot, every field and hill, every vale and rock, echo to his strains of love; but, beyond this, they reach every heart in every country; they are freshly remembered when the more showy efforts of great composers have been admired, murdered, and forgotten; they are the delight of palace and parlor, and preserve a living place in the affections of every man whose soul is open to melody or taste. We have spoken of his first efforts as being rough but powerful; but a circumstance, the common incident of every life, produced in him consequences such as few men could feel. He fell deeply and passionately in love with a young girl in his neighborhood, of low extraction and endowments; but if we may judge from her power over him, of extraordinary natural qualities. Whenever he speaks of her, his tenderness and purity are wonderful, and we might fancy them the productions of a scholar, did they not possess a grace beyond the proudest rules of art; and after her death, his lamentations for her, his cherishing of her memory, his recollections of her gentle love, and the tokens

they exchanged, are expressed in language to which verse could add no poetry. The stanzas beginning,

> Thou lingering star, with lessening ray,
> That lov'st to greet the early morn,

embody the essence of all the tenderness that broken-hearted love could feel, and the substance of all the impassioned elegies that ever were written. It is a singular fact, which we may remark here, that whenever he rises into great beauty of song, his thoughts are expressed in pure and simple English, while his more homely, but not less touching passages are dashed with the language and idioms of his country. Thus, for instance, when he soars in the Cotter's Saturday Night, into something of sublimity, he breaks out—

> Then kneeling down to Heaven's eternal King,
> The saint, the father, and the husband prays;
> "Hope springs exulting on triumphant wing,"
> That thus they all shall meet in future days,
> There ever bask in uncreated rays,
> No more to sigh or shed the bitter tear,
> Together hymning their Creator's praise,
> In such society, yet still more dear,
> While circling time moves round in an eternal sphere.

We have spoken of his love songs. It is sufficient to say that they are the finest in the language. They form a collection from which true love for ages may draw its images, and to whose notes it

will assuredly echo. His humor was uncommonly rich and peculiarly Scottish: it consists part of it in attacks on the clergy, one or two political satires, and some local productions. But his greatest work in this line is his Tam O'Shanter; a poem, which for natural wit, graceful narrative, and eloquent touches of reflection, is unrivalled. His description of the inn, the landlady, the rising joys of the bacchanals, Tam's wit, and the laughing chorus of wretches as hen-pecked as himself, the chase of the hags and the hair breadth 'scape; all are before us in living colors. One of his happiest works is a medley, which displays the versatility of his genius in striking relief, together with the looseness of his morality. It represents a joyous collection of beggars assembled at a frolic, who sing their songs in a wild and lawless spirit of enjoyment. The first is the song of a soldier, who, like a worn out steed, is yet ready to prick up his ears at "the sound of the drum;" and among the remainder, strange to say, is that delightful music,

> A highland lad my love was born,
> The lowland laws he held in scorn.

To show his graphic powers of describing, take this one verse from the poem. Imagine the jolly beggars at the pitch of revel and rapture, and the

chief called on to swell the merriment, and then read the following four lines—

> Then rising rejoicing
> Between his two Deborah's,
> Look'd round him and found 'em
> Impatient for the chorus.

It is a picture worthy of Burns to conceive, and Teniers or Wilkie to express on canvass.

The only remaining characteristic we shall speak of, is his devoted patriotism and proud independence. He was distinguished always for the latter quality, in every period of his life; and even when worn down by disease, his eye dimmed, his spirit broken, his energy gone, he asked his publisher for money, it was with an air of one who claimed a right and conferred an honor. He loved Scotland as a Scotchman always loves her, with pure, unaltered, undivided affection. He was her own poet in every respect; he sang of her victories: and "Scotts wha hae wi' Wallace bled," would animate her sons even in defeat; of love, and the gentle swain tells the self-same tale to his mistress in the very words of Burns; of her scenes of mirth, and his strains enliven many a rainy night, and make many an honest Tam, "fou and unco' happy." Those who wish to see this spirit of independence, must read his letters, and they breathe it in every word,

while his poems afford a noble marriage of high thoughts with homely and yet beautiful rhyme:

> Is there for honest poverty,
> Who hangs his head and a' that;
> The coward slave, we pass him by,
> And dare be poor for a' that.

These then were his three great characteristics: his descriptions of love in all its shapes, his fund of original humor, and his high-hearted and manly feelings. These are the qualities which endear him beyond expression to his countrymen, and make him the property of the world. We are not to look in Burns for long and great conceptions, for notwithstanding Doctor Johnson's estimate of genius, Burns could no more have written an epic, than Johnson could write poetry; and for the same reason, it was not in him. But in his peculiar and difficult walk he stands alone. Moore resembles him in many points: in his love for music, in his humor, in his patriotism and independence; but in all the higher qualities of song writing, he sinks far below him. He is very graceful, and abounds in beautiful conceits; such as a man of fine imagination would utter when he was not in love. Burns on the contrary sings a song whose every note is nature, and every feeling deep, intense, and absorbing love. Moore is a voluptuary—he revels with Eastern beauty, is lulled by the waters of Eden, and dreams

of dark-eyed houris; Burns is a simple Scottish youth, full of passion, breathing his sighs of every day occurrence, and telling

> His shepherd tale
> Under the hawthorn in the dale.

Moore delights in splendid imagery and corresponding language; Burns touches with a single simple phrase, a single simple chord, and it stirs the whole soul with the thrill of affection. Moore's verse is the dulcet eloquence of a practised flute, rolling delicious volumes of sound; Burns is the warbling of the bird in his native wilderness of boughs;

> The linnet in simplicity,
> In tenderness the dove,
> But more than all beside, was he
> The nightingale in love.

We have spoken of his enviable popularity; and if to be enshrined in the heart of a whole people, to be claimed and recognized as their poet, to hold in subjection and sway at will their prejudices and passions, to have one's memory reverenced to idolatry, and one's name inscribed first on the roll which they have destined to immortality, is enviable popularity, Robert Burns may challenge the world to display a prouder or a purer one.

M DCCC XXVIII.

ON THE

MISSION TO PANAMA.

ON THE MISSION TO PANAMA.

As this is a question which occupies the present attention of the literary world, and has been ably and eloquently canvassed on the floor of our national legislature, we shall consider it not unbecoming to offer a few desultory remarks on its general merits. The principal objection urged in the negative, is drawn from the wise and emphatic admonition of the first president of our union, and the first man of his time. In the last legacy of his love and care for our future interests, he exhorts us to keep aloof from "entangling alliances." Faithful to this admonition, if the object of the proposed invitation were to pledge the people of these United States to any particular set of measures, or to the support of any political crusade, it would well become our statesmen to keep aloof. We will go further. If its object or effect would be to fetter us in any wise, to prevent that perfect freedom which we now enjoy and exercise in our choice of

expedients at home, or in our conduct with foreign nations, it would well become them to beware; but unless these objects and this effect shall be proved to us, we shall continue to wish for its acceptance. As far as the discussion has proceeded, what are the proofs? No alliances are exhibited, no entanglements demanded. The invitation, if we understand it aright, is general. We are requested to send representatives to a congress to be holden at Panama. How this can be construed into an entangling alliance, we cannot conceive. But the genius of politics can and does. Its opponents baffled and at fault by the simplicity of this request, leaving the dry detail of fact, resort to the more fertile soil of conjecture. They tell us we shall be entrapped, inveigled, seduced into a surrender of our interests. They tell us, we may perchance give up our contentment and our quiet, without an equivalent, (for if it be true, what equivalent can be given,) and that their opinions may not want the authority and assistance of a respectable quotation; they bid us, in the language of Washington, to beware of "entangling alliances." If this be the contracted policy we are to pursue: if, while we feel safe for the present, we are not to forward that cause which must be our future safety; we, and the advocates of such reasoning, are not capable of appreciating the blessings we enjoy. The people of

the United States, are, in a manner, bound to extend by all honorable means consistent with their well being, if not to Europe, at least to our brethren of America, the rich privileges of independence. But let us suppose for a moment, that the purpose of this congress be to interpret treaties, and to fix the relation of America with European powers: is there not sound policy in such a project wisely executed? The time will come, we hope, when all America shall be firmly knit and cemented together by a general communion of interests and similarity of feeling, with regard to the rest of the world. Is not this desirable?—and if it be, what can more effectually tend to such a result, than such a congress? We do not imagine that there will be any artifice to delude or ensnare us. It cannot be the interest of the South American deputies to involve us in difficulties, the evil of which will be attributed to, and may return upon them. But to come back to ourselves. Are there no injuries to be feared, if we reject this invitation? Is our growing commerce, viewed as it is with the jealous eye of rivalry by Great Britain, nothing? Is this prolific branch of our wealth in peace, and our safety in war; this which supplies, invigorates, and consumes our agricultural and manufacturing products, nothing? Can there be no mistakes (laying aside evil motives) as to our wants and wishes?

Again, on the general ground. Do we not, by our rejection, virtually say, to all intents and purposes, we will have nothing to do with you—we are afraid of you—we wish no communion in your fortunes—we care not for your friendship or your enmity? And is this the language which should come from the republics of North, to the republics of South America? We think not, we hope not. We hope that a more liberal spirit will prevail; that the offer freely and frankly made, will be freely and frankly accepted; that our delegates will be able and upright men; that they will be instructed, not, when they are called on to join in any judicious act, to raise the watchword of "entangling alliances;" but that such a spirit of friendship and union will be cultivated, as will make both nations, if they should have to contend with any foreign power, not only possibly formidable, but certainly triumphant. But turning from these considerations of its expediency to itself—what noble events would attend the formation, and mark the proceedings of such a congress, if it should be rightly and temperately conducted? Then would be presented a spectacle, the moral sublimity of which would find no parallel in all the records of all the assemblies in the world. Our continent, which has been the blessed means of spreading the desire for rational freedom, against which neither

principalities nor powers shall prevail—would then consummate its work. In that assembly, which would be a meeting, not of kings and satraps to assert the claims of a family, but of men to vindicate the rights of man; which would be, not a holy alliance to settle the inheritance of a legitimate prince, to the crimes and follies of a legitimate throne; but the people of a whole hemisphere, declaring that hemisphere, by the mouths of their delegates and ministers, free, sovereign, and independent—in that assembly would their labors be finished. There would be no sectional disputes—no local prejudices. It would be the legislature, not of South, or of North America—not calculating for the petty details of counties, or of townships, and cities, and states, and nations; but the legislature of the continent of America, declaring for the inhabitants of that continent, of every variety of climate and of physical and mental complexions, their relative rights and duties. The critics of Europe might then inquire, who reads an American book, or looks on an American edifice? We could then show them the records of such a congress as a reply to their first sneer, and turn them, not to pyramids, that mark and mock the vanity of princes, and the servitude of the people; not to columns reared by the spoils of wasted provinces, to commemorate terrible victories—but to the smiling face of a

vast extent of territory, purified by American labor, happy through American freedom: an illustrious, and we would hope, an eternal monument of both.

ON ENGLISH COMEDY.

ON ENGLISH COMEDY.

THE present state of literary exertion is certainly presented to us in a singular aspect. There is an astonishing diffusion of knowledge among the middling and lower classes of society. The schoolmaster (to use the often quoted sentence of Brougham) is abroad in the land, and the rays of science are penetrating into the hovels of the poor and the ignorant, with an influence as warm, and almost as rapid, as the light of the natural sun exerts on the shadows of the morning twilight. This influence may be ridiculed and denounced by the aristocratic slaves of legitimate opinions; they may laugh at the excesses of those who feel, for the first time, the worth and the strength of their own minds; but the day is coming, and that quickly, when these would-be autocrats in the realms of learning shall find the strength of their efforts whom knowledge will make free, when the puny powers which think to stop the triumphal car shall be crushed beneath its wheels,

and like the original elder enemies of man, shall curse while they worship, and tremble while they believe. While, however, we rejoice at the glorious prospect, and prophesy that the present generation is sowing the seed of a rich, moral, and mental harvest, we must be allowed to offer a few preliminary observations on the question: whether this increase will tend to the production of great literary works. The argument in favor of the affirmative, is extremely forcible. It is true, that the advance of knowledge will increase the call for books, and their value when obtained. But unfortunately, we do not think, that in literature, the supply will always be ready for the demand. Take, for instance, our own time. Let us cast our eye over the wide extent of Great Britain, and our own country, with their vast reading population, and then ask for the great literary productions to satisfy their cravings. We do not speak now of the useful arts; in these the age is fruitful; but we ask, where are our epics and our dramas. Our plain answer must be this. Our epics are not, except we take Wordsworth, and Southey, and Barlow, as successors to the bard of seven cities, and the swan of Mantua, and our own Milton; and as for the drama, we ask pardon of Shakspeare and Fletcher, and Ben Jonson, while we compare them with the rant of Maturin, and the bashful failures of Lord

Byron. The fact is, although we have not maturely considered the subject, we are half inclined to think, that the different aspects which literature formerly presented from that which it now exhibits, resemble the difference between a country, whose general appearance is barren, but its mountainous parts sparkling with gold, "flaming as rival to its sire, the sun," and the broad level savanna, waving with rich grain, but presenting fewer eminences to the eye. And yet we should not complain of this result. We should be willing, that the luxuries of literature should be sacrificed to the diffusion of its cheaper comforts. We have, however, sadly wandered from our original subject, which was the very fertile one of English Comedy, and the result of our meditations may be shortly comprised in the remark, that it has exceedingly degenerated. The cause of this degeneracy is said to be chargeable to the age. But we do not feel so much faith in this assertion as do those who are interested to believe it. Men are the same in all times; and human nature is never finely displayed without applause. Are we to be told, or can we believe, that if Shakspeare or Ben Jonson were now to arise, and lay open the hidden secrets of the heart, their works would be delivered to empty benches? Are we to think that our intellects are too gross to enjoy the wit of Benedict, and the moralizing of Jaques, and the poetry of The

Midsummer Night's Dream? And that our vulgar intellects can receive no enjoyment, but from painted shows and tinsel mockeries of state and splendor? We do not believe it. The fault is not in the buyers, but the sellers. We ask for the delights of mind, and they tickle us with the fooleries of sense; we ask for that which shall improve the heart, and make a lasting impression on our conduct, and they give us only what is calculated to gratify "the gaping eye of idiot wonder;" we ask for the nutriment to support, and the business to occupy a man, and they thrust upon us the sugar-plums and the rattle of a child. We are not to be told that all the flowers are gathered, and that there can be no room for originality. Can any man, who knows the infinite variety which mankind affords for wholesome satire, believe this? We answer, no. Why did not Sheridan make the same objection, and throw by his pen. But he ventured into the field, and successfully pointed the finger of public scorn at the vices and follies of his day. Since his time, we have gradually grown worse, and now, forsooth, satire sleeps and folly stalks unblushingly through the land. While we thus mourn over the decline of English Comedy; it is delightful to draw upon its old stores for present use, and turn to those writers who have made it illustrious and immortal. The first

we shall notice is Shakspeare. His comedies are remarkable for being comedies in the true sense of the word. They are not mere broad farces, as most of our modern comedies are; but unite pathos and poetry with exquisite wit and humor to a degree never before equalled. They are wonderful also in the generality of their characters. There are but two or three of these throughout his works, which are individualized, strictly speaking: all bear the general stamp of a particular class of men, and each class exists now as it did then, so that the stronger points of his satire are as striking in their present as in their former application. Take, for instance, the character of Benedict, and no man has seen too little of human nature to know that he has met with many having the same general characteristics. He has not indeed encountered one possessing the quantity or quality of his wit; but he has seen the good-looking man who professes himself a "tyrant of the sex," and rails at their tongue, and is delicate in his choice of "household dispositions," and swears and talks himself into a belief that he will sooner be hung than married, and then, "most lame and impotent conclusion," falls in love with the first who dotes upon his precious person. These are marks which nature has written on man as if almost to confirm the accurate picturing of Shakspeare. The wit of

Shakspeare is wit in the old and true sense of the word, one of the brightest exertions of intellect, and distinct from that humor which we find in Fat Jack, in Dogberry, in the Clown in As You Like It, in Toby and Ague-cheek. Do we look for pure, classical, deep-thoughted wit, let us moralize with Jaques, let us steal behind him as he lies along

> "Under an oak, whose antique root peeps out
> Upon a brook that brawls along the wood,"

and laugh and weep by turns, at the follies and crimes of mankind. Let us bewail with Benedict the hapless fate of Claudio, who once loved "the music of drum and fife," but has changed to the soft wooing "of the pipe and tabor;" or with Claudio in turn, conclude from Benedict's "brushing his hat of a morning," "that the sweet youth is in love;" or jest with Mercutio, whose wit, too exquisite for a long life, makes its short day a blaze of fancy, and expires in mirth and merriment. The poetry of his comedies is scarcely exceeded in his tragedies, and of course is not equalled by any thing else in the language. The names of Rosalind and Viola will awaken in every breast recollections of sweet words and noble thoughts, of friendship and love, and all the pure affections, joyous and grievous; and the smile that dimples and the woe that weeps, are so delightfully mingled, that we are as sorry to

part with his sadness as we are glad to meet with his mirth. Next to Shakspeare stands Jonson, a man imbued with classical learning, and full of its best spirit. His Volpone is second only to Shakspeare, combining musical numbers and fine poetry with searching wit. It shows the influence of avarice, sacrificing all the emotions of the heart at the altar of mammon. The father destroys his son, the husband tempts the chastity of his wife, the wife is ready to disgrace her husband, and all these things are the fruits of the "sacred lust of gold." It reads to us a deep lesson on the baseness of the heart, and the abandonment of the principles, induced by that passion which makes a man live like a slave, die like a fool, be buried without an affection to hallow his grave, and remembered for the hatred of those he injured, and the contempt of those he cherished. With more poetry and less powerful satire than Jonson, came Beaumont and Fletcher. Let all who admire Milton's Comus read in Fletcher's Faithful Shepherdess, the original sources of many of his finest thoughts and sweetest expressions. The comedies of these two writers are rich fountains of delight to one who loves to drink of the "wells of English undefiled."

There is much bombast scattered throughout their works; but there is also so much sweetness, so much of the true music of words, so many delightful

touches, and so much pure wit, that we can pardon all their faults while we enjoy their beauties, and love the beauties even while we lament the faults. Of their numerous works, there is only one which really keeps the stage; but there are others not inferior to it. The Chances, and the Two Noble Kinsmen, are two splendid productions, and equal to their Rule a Wife and Have a Wife, as great a favorite as is the last. Their satire is more local, and does not reach so far, as that of their gifted predecessors; still each character, though it may not apply so well to its modern antitype, is drawn with a fidelity to itself, a keeping in all its parts, a perfect consistency throughout, which scarcely yields, even to the unquestioned master-spirits of the old drama. Next in rank to these, is Massinger. The play by which he is best known, The Fatal Dowry, is in our humble judgment, far inferior in merit to some others of his writings. The City Madam, for instance, has one character in it portrayed alone with power enough to stamp him with immortality, and that is the character of Luke. He is a man broken down by extravagance, and living on the bounty of a rich brother, who is introduced (in the scene where Luke is first prominently painted) as a hard-hearted and unfeeling creditor. Luke stands forth as the advocate of the oppressed debtors, to plead for mercy and compassion,

and his reasons are so wise, so true, so eloquent, and so persuasive, as to wring a reluctant reprieve. It is indeed morality, adorned with all the enforcements of poetry, and with an enthusiasm that defies argument, and chains us in conviction. In the next pointed situation, we see the humble brother a slave to the caprices of the wife of his rich relative, fawning on both, and almost worshiping their wealth. In the next, there is a change; Luke presumes his brother to be dead, and we find him the self-supposed heir of an immense estate, hugging himself on his wealth, and this scene opens with his splendid soliloquy on the blessings of the miser. The natural result of this change, is, that he becomes a tyrant to his brother's supposed widow and orphan children; and the "strange eventful history" is concluded by his brother's return, and his merited punishment. The soliloquy we have mentioned, is similar, but superior to Ben Jonson's in the opening of Volpone; but the character of a parasite in that play is superior even to Massinger's. We recommend this play to all who have appreciated the Fatal Dowry, and love their native language. Ford, who was before Massinger in order of time, is the last we shall notice of the older dramatists. His Lover's Melancholy is worthy of the age, and higher praise can we not bestow; his Broken Heart is also exquisitely

affecting, and in some passages, Ford stands not dishonored beside those, whose names we have so unworthily mentioned. Thus much for the older dramatists, a body of men before whose genius all modern writers sink into comparative littleness; compared with whose sublimity and wit, Milton alone can stand the test. To them may we award the name of founders of our tongue, and fathers of our drama. To them we should refer a foreigner acquainted with our language, as the sovereigns of our comic verse, and feel a noble pride in telling him that they represent the majesty of our dramatic literature. To them, the comic muse hath vouchsafed her choicest inspiration, and when they pour it forth we admire, and love, and worship at their bidding.

M DCCC XXVIII.

POETICAL PIECES.

THE LOST SHIP.

THE gallant ship rode far and fast
Upon her own blue wave:
That ship through sun and gale had past
Above full many a grave;
Where forms as fair, and hearts as warm,
Had sunk beneath the conquering storm,
And might was vain to save.

Through hurricane and tempest loud,
Through mountain seas on high,
That gallant ship had safely ploughed,
And dared the darkening sky.
Trembling had changed to firmness; tears,
Called forth by mean or manly fears,
Had dried in many an eye;

When she had dashed o'er hill and vale,
And bade the breakers roar

And vainly rage, while her proud sail
Was bellying for the shore;
But now the light she loved to hail,
The wild storm spirits' wrathful wail,
She feels, defies no more.

She hath gone down and carried there,
To ocean's coral cells,
The young, the high endowed, the fair,
All that with genius dwells;
Hearts that were formed to do and dare,
Yet doomed to die and perish, where
No stone their story tells.

She hath gone down; the troubled sea
Rolls its blue waves above them yet;
For whom the tear flowed fast and free,
For whom bright cheeks were pale and wet;
And all is vain—proud death! with thee,
All earthly strength is mockery
When thou and man have met.

She hath gone down; and buried deep,
Those glorious forms are lying,
Hushed by the billows' voice to sleep,
Nor waked by mortal sighing,
Nor prayers could shield, nor tears could keep
Such forms from death; these ye may weep,

These, not their souls, for they have fled,
Risen from mansions of the dead,
To realms of life undying,

To wait, till, buried hosts shall wake,
Roused by His coming whose bowed head
Bade death from his dark cell outbreak,
When gaped the speechless earth for fear,
And burst the temple's holy vail;
And priests and people quaked to hear,
And lips and cheeks grew deadly pale,
With terror smitten dread:
Until, the angel tones that spake,
When sang the morning stars on high,
Shall say to earth, "awake, awake,"
And thunder forth in majesty,
"Dark sea, give up thy dead."

M DCCC XXV.

THE INDIAN.

AWAY, away to forest shades!
Fly, fly with me the haunts of men!
I would not give my sunlit glades,
My talking stream, and silent glen,
For all the pageantry of slaves,
Their fettered lives and trampled graves.

Away from wealth! our wampum strings
Ask not the toil, the woes of them,
From whom the lash, the iron wrings
The golden dross, the tear-soiled gem;
Yet bind our hearts in the pure tie,
That gold or gems could never buy.

And power! what is it ye who rule
The hands without the souls? oh, ye
Can tell, how mean the tinselled fool,
With all his hollow mockery!
The slave of slaves who hate, yet bow,
With serving lip, but scorning brow.

And love, dear love! how can they feel
The wild desire, the burning flame,
That thrills each pulse and bids us kneel—
The power of the adored name;
The glance that sins in the met eye,
Yet loved for its idolatry!

They never knew the perfect bliss,
To clasp in the entwined bower
Her trembling form, to steal the kiss
She would deny, but hath not power;
To list that voice that charms the grove,
And trembles when it tells of love.

Nor have they felt the pride, the thrill,
When bounding for the fated deer;
O'er rock and sod, o'er vale and hill,
The hunter flies, nor dreams of fear,
And brings his maid the evening prey,
To speak more love than words can say.

Have they in death the sod, the stones,
The silence of the shading tree;
Where glory decks the storied bones
Of him whose life, whose death was free;
And minstrel mourns his arm whose blow
The foeman cowered and quailed below?

No; they confined and fettered, they
The sons of sires to fame unknown,
With nerveless hands and souls of clay,
Half life, half death, loathe, but live on;
And sink unsung, ignobly lie
In dark oblivion's apathy.

Poor fools! the wild and mountain chase,
Would rend their frail and sickly forms;
But for their God, how would they face
Our bands of fire, our sons of storms:
Breasts that have never recked of fears,
And eyes that leave to women, tears.

They tell us of their kings, who gave
To them our wild, unfettered shore;
To them! why let them claim the wave,
And hush its everlasting roar!
Then may we own their sway, but hark,
Our warriors never miss their mark.

Away, away from such as these!
Free as the wild bird on the wing,
I see my own, my loved green trees,
I hear our black-haired maidens sing;
I fly from such a world as this,
To rove, to love, to live in bliss!

M DCCC XXV.

TO A CHAINED EAGLE.

Thou king of birds! earth's meanest fool can laugh at thee, whose reign
Was far, far up, where man's dull orb may gaze and gaze in vain;
The thunder's mark, the splintered rock, were palaces of thine,
Yet thou art here, thine eye is sad, and tears shall sully mine.
Thine were the clouds, their thick dark forms pavilioned thee about,
From whence like collied midnight's flash, that eye looked fiercely out;
Thy footstool, earth's far summit! there thou sat'st to scorn the world,
Thy wing was bathed in God's own light; alas, that wing is furled.

The thunder communes not with thee, the lightning passes by;
The young, the free, the unfettered brave, it scathes; thou canst not die!
Nobly and proudly thus to die, to them alone is given,
The flashing meteors of this world, the chosen ones of heaven!
Oh, had'st thou fallen in thy flight to dare the rising sun,
Upon thine own proud battle-field dying with victory won;
Or had thine eye grown dim with age, not with excess of light,
Yielding to time the triumpher, yet braving him in might;
Or soaring up with pinions proud above these walls of space,
Closed on the sceptred hand of Jove, thine own appointed place;
Or winging downwards far away, where storms in thunder break,
Scorning the river's puny wave, spurning the unrippled lake;
There, seated on some mountain swell, communing with the gale,
Flashed a last lightning glance around, and died without a wail:

But here, why should such thoughts awake, a captive and a slave,
Thou canst not spring from chains of earth into thine own concave;
The pinion that hath borne thee once, is clipped, and thou art here,
And thou couldst weep, but that thine eye, hath never known a tear.
Thou sittest in sullen silence here, 'midst taunts and mockery;
Oh, for one glorious hour, thou criest, one moment of the free,
This wing should spread, this eye once more, be bright as heaven's own beam;
One glance, one spring, and far away—aye, 'tis a splendid dream.
Why cannot such bright dreams be true? the hopes and joys of man,
Soar up to heaven as thou hast soared, yet die where they began.
The mind whose flight is far, must droop, its eye be dim in night;
Thou art that mind in weal and woe, in darkness and in light.
There was a heart and eye like thine, the world shall tell the tale,
For at the kindling of that eye, his proudest foes grew pale;

Yet died he as the veriest slave, fettered in all but heart,
Captive, enchained, yet all unquelled—emblem of him thou art.

M DCCC XXV.

THE FEAST OF BELSHAZZAR.

The king sat on his throne,
In gold, and gems, and purple pride,
And gathered as rays around the sun,
Were warriors at his side;
The famed in council, the foremost in field,
The tongue that could charm, and the nerve that could wield,
Were called to the royal feast;
And there had the pride of the victor displayed,
The spoils of the vanquished and slave, and arrayed
The wealth that had bitterly, bloodily paid,
The crimes of the glorious East.

There was beauty in that hall!
The loveliest forms and the brightest eyes,
Lips whose kisses could never pall,
Bosoms that throbbed to the youngest sighs,
Of the first pure passion; Oh! sweeter that kiss,
That sigh in the fulness of early bliss,

Than a life of dallying, lingering love!
The stings of this world are forgotten, one dream,
Like the blue summer sky in the joyous stream,
Hangs over and hallows, and makes it seem
A pure reflection of heaven above.

There was music in that hall!
Strains of glorious sound that fell,
On the spell-bound ear like the waterfall,
With its rushing sheet and dancing swell;
The heaving heart, and the sparkling eye,
Confessed and crowned the melody
As it sweetly floated round;
And the sigh, the sob, and the crimson flush,
And fear's pale hue, and love's warm blush,
Like the proud sea's following surges rush;
And the soul is a slave to sound.

There was wine upon that board!
The goblet sparkled bright,
As the rich red juice was freely poured,
With its glancing, bubbling light;
As it kissed the brim it far outshone
The gem that was proudest where gems were strown,
Thick as stars in the blue midnight;
They quaffed, the heart was glad, the eye

Danced in its borrowed brilliancy,
And the pulse of love grew warm and high
With joy and passionate might.

There's terror in that hall!
Gone is the color from flushing cheek—
There is a spell on the festival;
Eye cannot lighten, lip cannot speak;
Fallen the red goblet, wine like rain,
Floods the cold marble, hush'd the strain,
Is echoed no more by the stilly heart;
Silence, pale silence, hath reared her throne,
Where sounded the revellers' merry tone;
The feast is broken, the revel is done,
And yet they may not part.

Mark their prince's hurried breath,
Quivering lip, and fixed eye;
He hath seen the sign, it speaks of death,
Of sceptre lost, of power gone by;
It was not human, that severed hand,
It moved not, wrote not, at man's command—
It was God's own prophecy!—
And now the winds unheeded moan,
In the halls of haughty Babylon,
And the pilgrim's footstep long and lone,
Echoes His victory!

M DCCC XXV.

TO POMPEII.

I ROVE through thy deserted streets, inhale
The atmosphere of centuries gone by,
In sad reality; while ghast and pale,
Around the haunts of their mortality,
Distinct to fancy's sight, are gathering fast,
"Their cerements burst," the spirits of the past.

Had they but voices; could the buried speak;
Would they not speak in thunder? Italy!
On thy degenerate head their wrath would wreak
A curse, as loud and deep as the vexed sea;
The curse of those, whose blood gushed forth in waves,
To free thy soil, thou heritage of slaves!

"Curse on thy palsied arm that will not strike,
As struck our Brutus to the tyrant's heart!
Is there not one among thy children, like
That dread avenger? one whose blood will start,

To think of our old might! not one to weep,
That Roman souls should in such bondage sleep?"

I am a pilgrim and a stranger, yet
Even I can blush, can weep for thy foul chains;
I cannot look upon thee, and forget
The rich proud blood that fills thy recreant veins;
But tears of shame and sorrow course my cheek,
And tell what words in vain essay to speak.

The eagle that embraced each hall and fane
Within the shadow of his warrior wing,
Is quelled and dark: oh, ne'er shall he again,
From bonds of earth in his old glory spring,
Upon the cloud of conquest poise his form,
To raise and rule the battle's thunder-storm.

Where are thy gods? they who were ever nigh
To combat in thy cause, why come they not
Clothed in the thunder of their majesty,
To glorify again each hallowed spot
With their proud presence, and to scourge in wrath,
The haughty Christian from their people's path?

Where is high Jove, the cloud-compeller? where,
The young Apollo, beautiful in might;
And she, the sea-foam's seed, the very air
Grew odorous of love where she did light;

And the fierce god of armies? Ye can say,
Shrines of forgotten worship, where are they.

Ye answer not, yet in your echoing halls
There is a voice; your silence is not dumb;
There is a voice; louder than words, that calls
On those who plume them in their pride, to come,
And, 'mid your trophies of divine decay,
To muse on pride, mightier, yet passed away.

And from your ruins to the mind's quick ear,
It wisely says, what, though the earth inhume
All that is earth's? the soul can laugh at fear,
In new existence 'mid destruction's bloom;
And gain the meed, to virtue only given,
Glory on earth and diadems in heaven.

M DCCC XXVI.

THE MARTYR.

It was a day of awe and fear,
  And populous Rome had gathered then
In her vast amphitheatre
  The world's proud lords and victors; men,
Or beasts, who came to glut their eyes
With tortures and with agonies.

But he, the victim of that day,
  Stood firm and fearless, not a sign
Of dread, did that calm face betray;
  Once, and once only round the line,
Of that unbroken multitude,
His dark eye flashed, his lip subdued,

With strong but momentary power,
  Some inward working; it might be
Some thought, some memory of an hour
  Happier than this, when he was free
From bonds unused to Roman limb:
But for His cause how dear to him!

There came a voice unto his ear,
  He heeded not, it came again;
He roused him from his dream to hear;
  It was his sovereign's; on the plain,
Beneath Rome's eagle lost and won,
Won by his own right hand, that tone

Had bid his comrades wreath him there
  With laurels, such as victors wear;
But now that voice unwelcome came,
  The voice of one who counselled shame;
Calmly the martyr stood, nor tear
Was in that eye, nor mark of fear.

Prince, I am ready; this cold blood
  Was warm, when it gushed forth for thee
Upon the plain where terrors stood;
  But it can flow, and thou shalt see
A Roman's life blood freely given,
Aye, willingly as rain from heaven.

And when thou seest this eye unquailed,
  This heart untroubled, unassailed,
Think not of stoic constancy,
  Child of a weak philosophy;
But know how well a Christian's faith
Can bear him up to conquer death.

Yes, for that faith, His faith who died
On the accursed tree, I dare
The scaffold's terrors, all that pride,
And priestly malice can prepare;
All that the heart and frame hath riven,
All cannot shake my hope of heaven!

Hear, soldier! thou hast bravely stood,
Fearless of death on fields of blood,
And saved from shame these folds that fly
In pride above our canopy;
And canst thou, wilt thou yield the life,
So nobly perilled in the strife

Upon that scaffold? think what pains
Will rack thy form while life remains;
And worse, far worse, what lasting shame,
Shall taint thy blood and blot thy fame!
Will thou not bow? one look, one sign,
Will make the proffered mercy thine.

No answer! by the gods on high,
Thou scornest our boon—then, traitor, die!
Traitor! the old man calmly said,
And sadly smiling, raised his head:
Traitor! then fixed his glance and broke
The death-like silence as he spoke.

I speak not now, my prince, to crave
The least, the meanest boon, thy power
Could offer me; the dark, dark grave,
Is bright and welcome in this hour,
To one whose faith hath fixed his gaze
On realms that know not hours nor days.

I may not, will not reck of life,
For it to me is in the leaf,
The autumn leaf, which the last strife,
The latest struggle (long or brief,
It matters not,) shall wrench away,
To perish with its kindred clay.

Thou sayest that I have perilled it!
'Tis well; and shall I basely now
To your idolatry submit,
Abjure the faith which I avow,
For what, even for thy tinselled show!
No, by the faith I cherish, no.

Look on these locks, they're thin and gray,
The frosts of near a century
Have whitened them; look, then, and say
How worthless, valueless to me,
Were the poor minutes I could live,
And all the honors thou couldst give.

But were they all eternal; were
  Each hour a life revived, renewed,
As the undying eagles are;
  Not for that vassal multitude,
Not for your diadem and throne,
The proudest, earth hath ever known;
Would I exchange this hour of death,
The martyr's victory and his wreath.

M DCCC XXVI.

THE CLOUDS.

THE clouds have their own language; unto me
They have told many a tale in by-gone days,
At twilight's hour, when gentle reverie
Steals o'er the heart, as tread the elvish fays,
With their fleet footsteps on the moonlit grass,
And leave their storied circles where they pass.

So, even so, to me the embracing clouds,
With their pure thoughts leave holy traces here,
And from the tempest-gathered fold that shrouds
The darkening earth, unto the blue, and clear,
And sunny brightness of yon arching sky,
They have their language and their melody.

Have you not felt it when the dropping rain
From the soft showers of spring hath clothed the earth
With its unnumbered offspring? felt not, when
The conquering sun hath proudly struggled forth

In misty radiance, until cloud and spot
Were blended in one brightness? can you not

Look out and love when the departing sun
  Enrobes their peaks in shapes fantastical
In his last splendor, and reflects upon
  Their skirts his farewell smile ere shadows fall
Above his burial like our boyhood's gleams
Of fading light, or like the "stuff of dreams"?

Or giving back those tints indefinite,
  Yet brightly blending, there to form that arch,
Whereon the angel-spirits of the light
  Marshalled their joyous and triumphant march,
When sank the whelming waters, and again
Left the green islands to the sons of men?

Oh, then as rose each lofty pile, and threw
  Its growing shadow on the sinking tide,
How glowed each peak with the resplendent hue,
  As its new lustre told that wrath had died,
Till the blue waves within their limits curled,
And that broad bow in beauty spanned the world.

Gaze yet again, and you may see on high
  The opposing hosts that mutter as they form
Their stern battalions, ere the artillery
  Bids the destroying angel guide its storm;

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If you have heard on battle's eve the low
Defiance quickly uttered to the foe,

When the firm ranks gaze fiercely brow on brow,
And eye on eye, while every heart beats fast
With hopes and fears, all feel, but none avow,
Pulsations which perchance may be their last,
Whom the unhonored sepulchre shall shroud;
If you have seen this, gaze upon that cloud:

How from the bosom of its blackness springs
The cleaving lightning kindling on its way,
Flinging such blinding glory from its wings,
That he who looks grows drunk with its array
Of power and beauty, till his eye is dim,
And dazzling darkness overshadows him.

Oh, God! can he conceive who hath not known
The wondrous workings of thy firmament,
Thine untold majesty, around whose throne
They stand, thy winged messengers, or sent
In light or darkness on their destined path,
Bestow thy blessings, or direct thy wrath.

Then here, in this thy lower temple, here
We kneel to thee in worship; what, to these
Symbols of thine, wherein thou dost appear,
Are painted domes or priestly palaces;

On this green turf, and gazing on yon sphere,
We call on thee to commune and to bless,
And see in holy fancy each pure sigh,
Ascend like incense to thy throne on high.

M DCCC XXVI.

TO MAY.

Come, gentle May!
Come with thy robe of flowers,
Come with thy sun and sky, thy clouds and showers,
Come, and bring forth unto the eye of day,
From their imprisoning and mysterious night,
The buds of many hues, the children of thy light.

Come, wondrous May!
For at the bidding of thy magic wand,
Quick from the caverns of the breathing land,
In all their green and glorious array
They spring, as spring the Persian maids to hail
Thy flushing footsteps in Cashmerian vale.

Come, vocal May!
Come with thy train, that high
On some fresh branch pour out their melody,
Or carolling thy praise, the live-long day,

Sit perched in some lone glen, on echo calling,
Mid murmuring woods, and musical waters falling.

Come, sunny May!
Come with thy laughing beam,
What time the lazy mist melts on the stream,
Or seeks the mountain top to meet thy ray,
Ere yet the dew-drop on thine own soft flower,
Hath lost its light or died beneath his power.

Come, holy May!
When sunk behind the cold and western hill,
His light hath ceased to play on leaf and rill,
And twilight's footsteps hasten his decay;
Come with thy musings, and my heart shall be
Like a pure temple consecrate to thee.

Come, beautiful May!
Like youth and loveliness—
Like her I love; oh, come in thy full dress,
The drapery of dark winter cast away;
To the bright eye, and the glad heart appear,
Queen of the spring and mistress of the year!

Yet, lovely May!
Teach her whose eye shall rest upon this rhyme
To spurn the gilded mockeries of time,
The heartless pomp that beckons to betray,

And keep as thou wilt find that heart each year,
Pure as thy dawn, and as thy sunset clear.

And let me too, sweet May!
Let thy fond votary see
As fade thy beauties, all the vanity
Of this world's pomp, then teach, that though decay
In his short winter, bury beauty's frame,
In fairer worlds the soul shall break his sway,
Another spring shall bloom eternal and the same.

M DCCC XXVI.

FORGET ME NOT.

Forget me not, forget me not!
It is the language of the heart,
That hallows each accustomed spot,
Whence we prepare to part;
The haunt of holy infancy,
And sunny childhood's dreamy spot,
Call the big tear into the eye,
And say, forget me not.

The mutual vow, the chaste embrace,
The blushing look of love; oh, what
Can dim their brightness or efface,
Their fond forget me not?
The passionate flame of boyhood's hour,
The flame half cherished, half forgot,
Swells on the soul with stifling power,
And throbs, forget me not.

The friendships of the dead appear,
The memories death can never rot,

And ring upon the mind's still ear,
  Their sad forget me not.
Voices like morning music wake
  A thrilling crowd from memory's grot,
Till the heart's chords in sorrow shake,
  To their forget me not.

Souls with our kindred souls that blent,
  Faces that brightened our dark lot,
And eyes come back, all eloquent,
  With their forget me not:
The thought from which the heart shrinks back,
  Is that we must unmemoried rot;
The hope that lightens life's dull track,
  Is this forget me not.

M DCCC XXVI

FOREST LEAVES.

Come hither among the forest leaves,
Yellow, and red, and blue,
And see how the sighing autumn weaves
Her robe of every hue;
To mantle the year that gorgeously dies,
Like the sunset's pomp away,
And to make the grave where the summer lies,
A mockery of decay.

Come hither among the forest trees,
You have seen their summer dress,
When birds were trilling their melodies,
From bowers of loveliness;
Come where the leaf so green and gay,
In sun and wind so free,
Is doomed to wither its bloom away,
Upon the sorrowing tree.

Come hither among the forest trees,
When the autumn moon shines clear,

And the cold and moaning autumn breeze,
Holds mournful revel here;
While his fitful gusts are piping shrill,
The dying leaves among,
Which wake from their bed by the dropping rill,
To dance to his midnight song.

Come hither among the forest leaves,
And weep, oh, well you may,
For cold is the heart that never grieves,
O'er the pride of death's array;
But colder still is the heart that weeps
Its precious tears in vain,
Nor knows that the leaf which sweetly sleeps,
Shall in beauty bloom again.

M DCCC XXVII.

MISSOLONGHI:

Greece had a fortress yesterday·
The flag of freedom waved upon
Its battlements; but morning's ray
Beholds it not: the glorious sun
Threw his last beam upon its fold,
A beautiful beam of light and gold;
That glorious sun hath risen again,
Hurrying the clouds from vale and wave,
And seeks in splendor, but in vain,
The banner of the brave.

Within that fortress yesterday,
There beat seven thousand hearts of mould
As tameless as the stern array
Of heroes at Thermopylæ;
Their own three hundred sires of old,
Who panted for the fight, the pall,
As young hearts for the festival,
And fought till it was time to die;
Who found the death they longed to meet,

And perishing in victory,
Were conquerors in defeat.

Around that banner yesterday,
With eye of fire and arm of nerve,
They swore their falchion in the fray,
Their arm on its avenging way,
From honor should not swerve;
That sooner far that arm should fall,
Shrunk, powerless, palsied, by each side;
That blade in danger's loudest call,
Each craven's fear deride;
Each eye should life and light resign,
Each stone beneath their feet should be
Sprinkled with blood a fitting shrine,
Oh, liberty! for thee.

And in the gloomy clouds of night,
The crescent moons of Moslem sway,
As if they feared to see the light,
Came on their darkened way;
And they, the noble and the brave,
Were slaughtered by the infidel;
And there was not an arm to save,
Or succor those who freely fell
For freedom's name, yet falling, left
To Greece their noble legacy,
A hope which tyrants have not reft,
Laurels which gathered from the tree,

That glory shields from time and theft,
Bloom in fresh immortality;
And than all these that holier gift,
A martyr's memory.

They swore each stone should be a shrine,
Of sacrifice to liberty;
And it shall be a shrine, for there,
The pilgrim's step, the patriot's prayer,
Shall linger, shall ascend on high:
And freedom! thou shalt make it thine,
Thine as thou madest their land of yore;
The spot on which Bozzaris died,
The grave of him whose bright harp wore
The cypress wreath, too soon for thee,
Who left his own free foreign shore,
To battle by thy side;
Yes, holy these shall ever be,
And thou shalt make that fortress ground,
A temple sacred unto thee,
And lovely to the brave and free,
From sea and land who gather round,
And there thy Grecian sons shall falter,
Their sad proud prayers upon thine altar,
And make each breeze that round it stirs,
Thick with the vows of worshippers.

M DCCC XXVII.

TO ——

Dear girl, full many a time have I
  Seen cheeks of as transparent hue,
And lips as purely rich, and eye
  As beautifully blue;
Yet never have I known a face,
  So darkly brilliantly divine,
As when a kindling smile gives place
  To that dear frown of thine.

Oh, some there are who love to look,
  When heaven is almost dim with light,
And would not let the blue arch brook
  A cloud upon its sight;
But when around the conquering sun
  They thickly crowd, oh, then be mine,
To gaze with rapture as upon
  That lowering eye of thine.

For though my love has been to thee
  As true as hope, or faith on high,

Yet oft of late have fallen on me
  The flashings of that eye;
And I am slave enough to bless
  The look that would each hope reprove,
And worship even the loveliness
  That bids me cease to love.

M DCCC XXVII.

CHANGES.

I OFTEN muse at even tide,
When present things are dimly seen,
And scenes that day hath power to hide,
Come back all fresh and green,
And throng my sense, though all alone,
Upon the changes I have known.

For from our cradled infancy,
The world is changing every hour;
Faces are gone we used to see,
The bud becomes a flower,
That blossoms in the dew and sun,
And fades as other flowers have done.

The morning sky that looked so blue,
So very blue and full of mirth,
When night's thick curtain it updrew,
And looked upon the earth;
Was clouded at mid-day, but now
It bears a rainbow on its brow.

The cold in heart, and gray in head,
  May laugh my fantasies to scorn,
And tell me that when I have read
  The changes they have borne;
Then I at length, and not till then,
May descant on the change in men.

Well let us then look round in thought,
  On those whom we have seen for years,
And mark the wonders time hath wrought,
  And smile perhaps through tears,
To feel with every face we view,
That we ourselves are changing too.

Yes, I alas, am changed in heart,
  I cannot smile, and may not weep;
The tear beneath my lid may start,
  Its course it must not keep;
I think on what I was, and then
Would gladly be the same again.

The same in childhood's merriment,
  That frolic lightness of the blood,
The same in tears which seemed but sent,
  As dew upon the bud;
The same in hopes which turned to fear,
And fears which came to disappear.

The same in innocence of mind,
  The same in danger and delight,
The same when mates were cross or kind,
  The same at morn and night;
The same, so I were changed I trow,
From that dull being I am now.

M DCCC XXVIII.

THOUGHTS OF A STUDENT.

Many a sad, sweet thought have I,
  Many a passing sunny gleam,
Many a bright tear in mine eye,
  Many a wild and wandering dream;
Stolen from hours, I should have tied
To musty volumes at my side;
Given to hours that sweetly wooed
My heart from its study's solitude.

Oft when the south winds, dancing free,
  Over the earth and in the sky,
And the flowers peep softly out to see
  The frolic spring as she wantons by.
When the breeze and beam, like thieves, come in
To steal me away, I deem it sin
To slight their voice; and away I'm straying,
Over the hills and vales a-maying.

Then can I hear the earth rejoice,
  Happier than man may ever be;

Every fountain hath then a voice,
That sings of its glad festivity;
For it hath burst the chains, that bound
Its currents dead in the frozen ground,
And flashing away in the sun has gone,
Singing, and singing, and singing on.

Autumn hath sunset hours and then,
Many a musing mood I cherish,
Many a hue of fancy, when
The hues of earth are about to perish;
Clouds are there, and brighter I ween,
Hath real sunset never seen:
Sad as the faces of friends that die,
And beautiful as their memory,

Love hath its thoughts, we cannot keep,
Visions the mind may not control,
Waking, as fancy does in sleep,
The secret transports of the soul.
Faces and forms are strangely mingled,
Till one by one they are slowly singled,
To the voice and lip, and eye of her,
I worship like an idolater.

Many a big proud tear have I,
When from my sweet and roaming track,

From the green earth and misty sky,
And spring and love, I hurry back.
Then what a dismal dreary gloom,
Settles upon my loathed room;
Darker to every thought and sense,
Than if they had never travelled thence.

Yet I have other thoughts, that cheer
The toilsome day, and lonely night,
And many a scene and hope appear,
And almost make me gay and bright.
Honor and fame that I would win,
Though every toil that yet hath been
Were doubly borne, and not an hour
Were brightly hued by fancy's power.

And though I may sometimes sigh to think,
Of earth, and heaven, and wind, and sea,
And know that the cup that others drink,
Shall never be brimmed by me;
That many a joy must be untasted,
And many a glorious breeze be wasted,
Yet would not if I dared repine,
That toil and study and care are mine.

M DCCC XXVIII.

SIGNS OF LOVE.

I HAVE read full many a witching tale of love in
by-gone years,
Its deep sweet sighs, its timorous hopes, its raptures
and its tears,
And yet with all my lore of love, I never could
divine,
If it hath ever deigned to dwell within this heart of
mine.

Fair lady, then I come to thee, and by that full
black eye,
Whose drooping lash just half conceals its soft
quick witchery,
I know that thou canst spell me right, the story I
would read,
If the words I dare to whisper thee, be proofs of love
indeed!

I cannot well remember now, that I have lately
known
One single form or face I thought unrivalled and
alone;

Yet many a form of winning grace, and look of mirth and light,
In all the pride of loveliness have flashed upon my sight.

And I have stopped and gazed, and yet have turned to gaze once more
At charms 'twere not idolatry, I fancied, to adore;
And still, with scarce a pang I saw the beautiful depart,
And felt though they had dimmed mine eye, they could not touch my heart.

But I can just recall to me, some few short years ago,
How there was one who shared with me my boyish weal and woe,
And rambled with me many a time, when spring was on the earth,
And the birds were coming back with songs, and buds were just in birth;

Or when the autumn sunset spread its many a golden hue
Upon the clouds, and leafy earth, and sky and stream of blue,
And how we talked till voice and lip trembled unconsciously,
And how I blushed, and looked at her, who blushed, and looked at me;

And how I feared lest she should find the passionate
hope I felt,
The strange sweet thought, the waking dream, that
in my bosom dwelt;
Yet could have almost frowned on her, who would
not always see
The glance I hoped her own would meet in pride of
modesty:

And how when mirth was loud of laugh, and the
eye was bright with bliss,
And the cup was sparkling with the juice, I met
with greeting kiss,
Her name, one word, one thought of her, and
memory came to fill
My heart with pensive music, like the voice of
autumn rill.

But ah! those days of young delight, I should have
all forgot,
But memory sometimes wakes within, and sighs that
they are not,
And 'minds me of the flower she pulled when the
parting hour was nigh,
And gave me with a blushing cheek and a big tear
in her eye.

I kept it, and I often loved in secresy to sit,
And think it smiled and grew more green whene'er
I looked on it;

But I grew cold and careless, and it pined as if with grief,
And now, whene'er I look, I find a moisture on the leaf;

A single tear upon that leaf, and she who gave it, she,
Has she too pined? but I! I am the fool of memory!
What, lady? Do those dark eyes smile? It cannot be that this,
This melancholy musing thought, can be love's dream of bliss!

And now you sigh, as if to say, that in this world of ours,
Grief steals round finest feelings as the dew hangs on the flowers,
And passionate love, as if to show even joy grows sorrow here,
Breathes its sweet odor in a sigh, and smiles but through a tear.

M DCCC XXVIII.

ON A SEAL,

THE DEVICE OF WHICH WAS, THE SUN SETTING WITH THE MOTTO "JE REVIENDRAI."

As fades the sun's departing light,
  On hill and wave and leafy tree,
And the thick shades of coming night,
Gather above his burial bright,
  In funeral majesty:

So when we part; when the last token
  Of love, that lights that eye, is gone,
When the last speaking word is spoken,
When the last breaking grasp is broken,
  Dark fears come crowding on.

But as the morning's eye hath found
  That sun rejoicing in his path,
Breaking the cloudy chains that bound,
Making the mists that linger round,
  All radiant with his wrath.

So when that eye comes beaming back,
With tales such eyes alone recite,
Then the heart's sunshine gilds each rack
Of cloudy fear that dims its track,
Till all is lost in light.

M DCCC XXVII.

TRANSLATIONS

FROM

DE BERANGER.

LA VIEILLESSE.—OLD AGE.

We know that time, who wings us by,
  Though youth yet finds us warm and gay,
Leaves footsteps in our cheek and eye,
  That warn us of decay;
But still at every step we see
  Fresh flowers spring up, sweet buds unfold,
And feel 'tis happiness to be;
  This is not to grow old!

In vain amid the festive scene,
  With sound of song, and light of wine,
We soothe the heart, yet fresh and green,
  They tell us, we decline;
But even until the last dim hour,
  To love, though limbs grow frail and cold,
The joyous wine, the song's sweet power;
  This is not to grow old!

Does the weak fair, who gaily took
The worship of our frolic prime,
Repeat to us with taunting look,
The ravages of time;
At less expense more bliss to gain,
And in a mistress, know we hold
A friend, who shares each joy and pain;
This is not to grow old!

Still though our wonted passions keep
Within our breasts their kindly sway,
Fate speeds, then let us calmly sweep
Together to decay:
Thus from the corner of my age,
To see, my friends, in virtue bold,
The storms of life innoxious rage,
And end with you its pilgrimage;
This is not to grow old!

LE CRI DE LA FRANCE.—THE CRY OF FRANCE.

Away with the Bourbons! 'Tis France who exclaims:
Too long have we borne your degenerate sway;

Oppressors! we blush for your faces and names,
Fly! Fly to your dens! Freedom kindles her flames:
Away with the Bourbons! away!

Away with the Bourbons! their cruelties' dye,
The pencil of Clio were weak to portray;
Yes! hark to the voice of your victims! their cry
The gloomy abysses return to the sky:
Away with the Bourbons! away!

Away with them! then shall our proud Tricolor,
Our bow on the mountains, its splendor display,
And "our Country, our Honor," the words we adore,
The flag of our fathers shall hallow once more:
Away with the Bourbons! away!

Away with the Bourbons! the Loire shall again,
Reassemble its heroes, and call to the fray,
And they who've forgotten to vanquish, shall then,
'Neath our banners renew their old glory like men:
Away with the Bourbons! away!

Away with them! Aye! and the hordes they have led
To disgrace our free soil with their foreign array,
Crush, Frenchmen! the tyrants who basely betrayed,
Then sought from strange banners inglorious shade:
Away with the Bourbons! away!

Away with the Bourbons! my country arise,
Regain the proud rank, thou shouldst honor today,
Thou shouldst reign: then sweep off with their toys
and their ties,
The minions we hate, the vile race we despise:
Away with the Bourbons! away!

LES VETERANS.—THE VETERANS.

Ah, they have now almost forgot,
Our service in the bannered wars,
And we are fain to hide the scars,
Trophies of hearts that wearied not;
Jena and Ulm can witness how
Hands nerved to do, hearts throbbed to dare,
And yet they say with scornful brow,
Oh, they were there!

Yes, we were there, for honor there,
Not for a chief, but France; that name
Wakes in each heart a filial flame,
Alike in glory and despair;
Our mother calls, we fly to save,
She bids, our blood flows free as air:
In dark defeat, or well-won field,
Still we were there!

Yet all the valiant could not fall,
And sheltered now will they remain,
Till France shall summon them again,
And find them few, but fearless all;
Proud remnant of that host who came
To shake the nations with despair;
To renovate thine olden fame,
We still are there!

To shield our king, to guard his crown,
In peril's path we boldly move
To save a people whom we love,
To crush a foe who fears our frown,
And oh, when honor's voice shall sound,
That voice shall not be lost in air;
Our country's living ramparts round,
We shall be there!

Now we resign those blades that blazed
Such lightning on the vaunting foe;
We lay our eagle ensigns low,
Those meteors on which nations gazed;
But if our France, if glory high,
Should summon us, the world shall hear
Louder than triumph's note, our cry,
Behold us here!

TO ——

Oh well do I remember now, the time when first we met,
And memory must forget to hoard all joy, ere I forget
That form so dear, that front so clear, and the paleness of that face,
That won me with its speaking lines of tenderness and grace.

And then the meeting of our eyes, oh, years and years have flown,
And yet upon my heart that glance is graven as on stone,
And from that heart must life depart, before decay hath traced
Its impress on that moment, or its memory defaced.

For, even now though thou art changed, and though that eye hath strayed
meet the glance another gives, I dare not to upbraid:

For when I could and would upbraid, that look
comes fresh through years,
And dims the eye that shone with wrath, and turns
my taunts to tears.

How oft when spring came sweetly in, and woke
the early flowers,
I watched to meet your morning step, and cursed
the lagging hours;
The rose you threw I treasured too, to feed my
memory,
But all its leaves and fragrance fled, and left the
thorn with me.

And even then I fondly dreamed, the faded might
resume
The fragrance of its dewy prime, the life of its young
bloom;
But now I know, that even though the tree may bud
once more,
Nor sun, nor dew, nor breeze, can e'er its withered
flower restore.

Yet like the Israelite of old, who turned with linger-
ing look,
His eye upon the ruined fane, ~~Lord~~ God's majesty for-
sook,

And offered there his evening prayer, and joyed to see arise
From its neglected altar-stone, his morning sacrifice.

So from the shrine, thy form once knew, and yet thy memory knows,
No other prayers were ever breathed, no other incense rose;
And even now, though desolate thou hast left it, it shall be
The temple of my worship still, and consecrate to thee.

M DCCC XXVIII.

LINES

ON HEARING OF THE UNEXPECTED DEATH OF A YOUNG LADY.

So young, so fair, so early called,
I scarce know how to weep;
The blow that felled thee hath appalled,
Even sorrow's self to sleep.
Had I but dreamed thou couldst have died,
The thought had caused my tears to start;
The rod that should have poured their tide,
With sudden stroke hath petrified
The gushings of the heart.

Mournfully, tearfully, I know
We watch the dull decline
Of early hearts with joyous glow,
And cheeks with blush like thine;
Yet in that sorrow's strongest sway,
It is a sadly dear delight,
To soothe the body's slow decay,
And check the lingering spirit's flight.

But oh, stern death will coldly lay,
His finger on that form, whose light
An hour before was full and gay,
And glorious in our sight!

So fair, so young, when last I heard
The voice I loved to hear,
It greeted me with welcome word:
How hushed that pall-hid bier!
And when I saw that joyous eye,
Brightening with every glance it gave,
I could have idly laughed, if I
Had dreamed so soon its radiancy
Would darken in the grave.

And even now that I have seen
All death demands of life;
The things that are not, and have been,
Seem in perpetual strife.
Greeting and grieving, smiles and tears,
The light laugh and the silent earth,
In clouds and sunshine linger here,
Joy smiles on sorrow, and thy bier
Seems vocal with thy mirth.

Yet let me wake, but not to sigh,
Thy form is with the dead;

Thy soul, thyself, thou couldst not die,
The undying hath but fled.
Death is a conqueror o'er the eye
And cheek, but to the soul a slave:
He opes its prison, bids it fly,
And wings its joyous course on high,
To him whose brightest victory,
Was gathered from the grave.

M DCCC XXVIII.

STANZAS

ON HEARING THAT THE OFFICIALS OF WESTMINSTER ABBEY HAD REFUSED PERMISSION TO BURY THERE THE BODY OF LORD BYRON.

THEY have spurned the proud relics! well, thus should it be;
Oh thus should the bigots who feared him in life,
With the spirit of vampyres exultingly see,
O'er his ashes at least, they were victors in strife.

Let them peck at the laurels he nobly hath won,
Let them try the full tide of his glory to stem;
Let the eagle who blazoned his breast in the sun,
Be "hawked at," for scorning to grovel with them.

As with Brutus of old, when Augustus denied
A place by his rivals in patriot fame,
Each Roman recalled his proud memory and sighed,
And frowned on the tyrant, and murmured his name.

Even so shall the Briton unborn, who shall tread
Those stones which the genius of England has made
All instinct with memory, turn from the dead,
To ask where the bones of his Byron are laid.

And then shall his cheek burn with blushes to know,
That his country permitted these things of a day,
To aim at the dead their inglorious blow,
And to wreak their poor vengeance on genius and clay.

Poor fools! did they dream that their meanness could blot
That glory whose blaze can all dimness consume;
That his claims in his coffin would all be forgot,
That they buried his fame with his flesh in the tomb!

What recks it where that which held genius may sleep,
Whether earth may rise o'er it, or oceans may roll;
The flight of the spirit what fetters can keep,
And what death can extinguish the life of the soul.

No, the treasures he gave us, the fame he bequeathed,
Are ours; yet we feel that the part which must die;

His bones shall outlast the vile slanders they breathed,
And be hallowed with worship wherever they lie.

And if England reject them, old Greece will receive
The relics of him who fell armed for her fight;
O'er the tomb of the bard shall her warriors grieve,
In the muse of the bard shall her children delight.

And when Freedom and Genius in triumph return,
To rebuild their old temples, and visit the new,
The first, shall an altar erect o'er his urn,
And the strains of the second shall hallow it too.

M DCCC XXVIII.

TO ——

Lady, when fools who linger near,
  Tell thee how oft my heart will rove,
They but abuse thine easy ear,
  And wrong my constant love.
Their babblings could not tell thee, dear,
  How she the loving gentle dove,
Wings her far wandering through all air,
  But nestles in the grove.

Nay, love! I would not swear, for thou,
  All simply witching as thou art,
Knowest that the lips frame many a vow,
  From which the soul would start:
Before one only shrine I bow,
  In changeless homage of the heart;
Thou doubt'st it, dear! come, question now
  Its every hidden part.

Ask of the nightly pillow where
  Her form, all grace, too sweetly came;

Ask of the lips which meant for prayer,
Words that but spelt her name;
Ask of that dream which lingering there,
With dear delusion thrilled my frame;
Ask of the morning thought, if e'er
My love hath been the same.

Ask of the day's romance, whose light
Was but her worshipped memory;
The nerve that trembled in her sight;
The eye that could undazzled see
The glance of power's meridian height,
Abashed, if she but looked at me:
Ask these if love so constant, might
To her unfaithful be!

And even when that much-loved eye,
My hope, my heart is garnered in,
Hath turned from me its radiancy
Another's glance to win;
Ask of that sad rebellious sigh,
Which proudly swells, then breaks within
This agonizing breast, if I
Have ever constant been.

Ask of long years whose every flower,
Found in her smile, its sun and dew;

That smile which lit the brightest hour,
  And streamed its ray the darkest through!
And if all tell thee that its power,
  My love ne'er changed, but stronger grew;
Then ask her if that eye should lower,
  On worshipper so true.

M DCCC XXIX.

SEA SONG.

Over the far blue ocean wave,
On the ocean winds I flee,
Yet every thought of my constant heart,
Is winging, love, to thee;
For each foaming leap of my gallant ship,
Had barbed a pang for me,
Had not thy form, through sun and storm,
Been my only memory.

Oh, the seamew's wings are fleet and fast,
As he dips in the dancing spray;
But fleeter and faster, the thoughts I ween,
Of the dear ones far away!
And lovelier too, than yon rainbow's hue,
As it lights the tinted sea,
Are the daylight dreams and sunny gleams
Of the heart that throbs for thee.

And when moon and stars are asleep on the waves,
Their dancing tops among,

And the sailor is winging the long watch hour,
By the music of his song;
When our sail is white in the dark midnight,
And its shadow is on the sea,
Oh, never knew hall such festival,
As my fond heart holds with thee!

M DCCC XXIX.

TO ——

Oh the spring has come again, love,
With beauty in her train,
And her own sweet buds are springing,
To her merry feet again;
They welcome her onward footsteps,
With a fragrance full of song,
And they bid her sip from each dewy lip,
Of the rosy tinted throng.

Oh the spring has come again, love,
And her eye is bright and blue
With a misty passionate light that veils
The earth in its joyous hue;
And a single violet in her hair,
And a light flush in her cheek,
Tell of the blossoms maids should wear,
And the love tales they should speak.

The spring has come again, love,
And her home is every where;

She grows in the green and teeming earth,
And she fills the balmy air;
But she dearly loves, by some talking rill,
Where the early daisy springs,
To nurse its leaves and to drink her fill,
Of the sweet stream's murmurings.

The spring has come again, love,
On the mountain's side she throws
Her earliest morning glance, to find
The root of the first wild rose;
And at noon she warbles through airy throats,
Or sounds in the whirring wing
Of the minstrel throng, whose untaught notes
Are the joyous hymns of spring.

Oh the spring has come again, love,
With her sky lark's cloudy song;
Hark! how his echoing note rings clear,
His fleecy bowers among!
Her morning laughs its joyous way,
In a flood of rosy light,
And her evening clouds melt gloriously,
In the starry blue of night.

Oh the spring has come again, love,
And again the spring shall go;

And withered her sweetest flowers, and dead
Her soft brooks' silvery flow;
And her leaves of green shall fade and die,
When their autumn bloom is past,
Beautiful as her cheek, whose tint
Looks loveliest at the last.

Oh, life's spring can come but once, love,
And its summer will soon depart,
And its autumn flowers will soon be nipped,
By the winter of the heart;
But yet we can fondly dream, love,
That a fadeless spring shall bloom,
When the sun of a new existence dawns,
On the darkness of the tomb.

M DCCC XXIX.

MY CHOICE.

THERE is a light within her eye that brightens every gaze,
And a rosy smile upon her lip, that a joyous heart betrays;
And a fairy frolic in her form that makes each motion seem
As graceful as the bounding course of a laughing mountain stream;
The long and jetty lash that hides the deep eye's blacker hue,
The rival roses in her cheek, her white brow's veins of blue,
Her gentle and her joyous laugh, and the music of her voice,
Have won my spirit unto her, and she shall be my choice.

Her spirit is all gentleness, and yet her bearing high,
And passionate thoughts sleep sweetly in the circle of her eye,

And a pure and delicate pride seems ever in her
breast to dwell,
And breathes around her form the charm and magic
of a spell;
So gentle, not a shaft of wit in malice does she dip,
And satire's self comes smilingly and sweetly from
her lip,
And her look and tone whene'er we meet, they make
my heart rejoice,
And win my spirit unto her, and she shall be my
choice.

There may be eyes as deeply dark, and brows as
fair to view,
And cheeks as softly blended, and as beautiful of
hue,
And gentle hearts, with gentle thoughts, and gentle-
ness of words,
And voices like to her's that mocks the music of
spring birds:
I think there may be such, and yet I scarcely can
say why,
For as in visions of the night, they pass me idly by;
But she can wield me with a word, one tone of her
soft low voice—
She hath won my proud soul unto her, and she shall
be my choice.

COWPER.

To a warm heart unite a manly mind,
Let playful humor blend with wit refined,
Let him the charms which nature spreads, survey
With rapturous eye, with answering skill portray;
His proudest notes of praise let virtue claim,
And sin but hear his song to blush for shame;
Let his religion, "pure and undefiled,"
Be fixed though liberal, and though firm be mild;
Then with all these the bard's true fire combine,
And taste shall laud, and virtue love the line:
Both shall with jealous care protect his fame,
And wreathe their brightest laurels for his name.

And such was Cowper! such the laurels fair
He nobly won, and shall forever wear;
For he was nature's bard, and shunned for her,
The city's crowded mart, its smoke and stir,
Dwelt in her haunts retired, and loved to scan
Her pure calm scenes yet uncorrupt by man;

Her varying seasons sang with varying strain:
The bright young spring rejoicing on the plain,
And summer's mellowing sun and flashing bloom,
And gorgeous autumn's fruitage and perfume,
And dreary winter, when in cloud and storm
He sternly stalks to wither and deform,
Then with glad pencil, 'midst its gloomiest scene,
Showed the heart's heaven unclouded and serene,
Where love, content, and self-approving worth,
Encircling, bless the dear domestic hearth.

Oft, when at morn, or noon, or "dewy eve,"
He wanders forth to think, perchance to grieve,
How do I love in fancy's steps to go,
To share his musing or partake his woe,
While, as we pass, from every trembling spray,
The warbling wild-bird cheers our devious way;
To learn from hut or hall, from tree or flower,
Some natural lesson, taught with careless power;
Some graceful moral turned with easy art,
To raise the mind, and purify the heart.

The bard of virtue, for whate'er his lay,
In feeling serious, or in humor gay,
Virtue was all his end, and in her cause
He gained his proudest meed, her pure applause;
Against her foes in fight, his weapons, wit,
Strong sense, keen satire, he was sure to hit;

In venal senate or in courtly bower,
In robes of holy lawn or purple power,
Sin met his gaze the same, and found with him,
Its tones all discord and its tinsel dim.
And oh, when man's just rights awake his strain,
And freedom bids him spurn the oppressor's chain,
When her warm pulses swell along his line,
Its throb how firm, its diction how divine!
It glows with fervent heat of patriot zeal,
And nobly speaks, what freemen nobly feel:
Yes! he, the glory true, the virtuous fame,
Which prouder lyres have sought, may proudly claim,
"That not in fancy's maze he wandered long,
"But stooped to truth, and moralized his song."

But hark! a higher note! can human lyre
Ask for its strings a more celestial fire!
Yes; though this earth be fair, the world above
Hath purer harmonies and holier love;
Though dear the strain with sweet persuasion crowned,
Which spreads earth's kindliest charities around,
And eloquent in love with noble plan,
Endears, cements the brotherhood of man;
Yet heavenlier themes a loftier song require,
And he who touched the prophet's lips with fire,

Will to the bard some glorious dreams supply,
Whose verse uplifted, lingers in the sky;
Not that the poet's wing should always burn
For heavenly themes, and earth indignant spurn,
Or pass with careless glance or heedless tread,
God's works below in rich profusion spread;
Yet let his "eye's fine frenzy," wisely roll,
Let those who charm the sense improve the soul;
Let them though winged for heaven and gods in birth,
Stoop their proud plumes to bless and light the earth.

Oh, had that bard whose bold and burning page
Has stamped his name, the poet of an age,
Given but to virtue's cause his noble fire,
Which even while sinning, half redeems his lyre,
And turned, while pure emotions burned within,
His scorn for folly, to a scorn for sin;
Then hurled his moral thunder, till each stroke
Made wrong and outrage tremble while he spoke;
How had the sin he shamed, in silence slept,
Or touched perchance, repented, while it wept:
Oh had the bard been such, his crown how green,
His life how pure, his parting how serene!
His dying hour, how golden its decay,
What beams upon his mounting plumes would play!

How would they seem with seraph strength to rise,
While his voice joins the music of the skies,
And heaven receives though hushed his earthly lyre,
A welcome minstrel to the eternal choir.

Such, such was Cowper; such his golden crown:
He soared to heaven to bring its blessings down;
He shared the Christian's faith, the Christian's fears,
His trembling bliss, his ever-trusting tears.
With him the saint may hope, the sinner melt,
And all must feel, for what he taught he felt;
Felt while he taught in weakness, sin, and shame,
The height, the depth, the wonders of His name;
"Without whom we are poor, give what He may,
"And with whom rich, take what He will away."

And he who now, though closely wed, and long,
To lore which scorns the muse, yet sins in song;
If he with hand unskilled, though heart sincere,
May build a rhyme which beauty deigns to hear;
Shall think his sin forgiven if she but deem,
His feeble strain hath not disgraced his theme,
Or bent with partial smile his toil to pay,
Approve the theme, though she condemn the lay.

M DCCC XXX.

TO ——

——

LADY, the stalk you gave to me,
In all its fresh leaved greenness, brings
Full many a moment's sunny glee,
In radiance back on memory's wings;
Those wings which like the eastern bird,
Which shows each breeze a different dye,
Darkly or brightly waft, thought stirred,
Long bygone visions to the eye,
As sorrow's gloom, or pleasure's ray,
Upon their varying plumage play.

And such come thronging round me now,
Most glorious eyes of liquid jet,
Lips Hybla honeyed, arching brow,
And all of thee I worship yet,
Glances on which I fastened mine;
How could I tear one glance away?
A voice whose music most divine,
Melted to words from lips which lay,
Just oped to let the sweet breath cleave them,
Which slowly left, as loth to leave them.

And visions of the wave come back,
I dream again, the sunny swell
Breaks round our prow's careering track,
That prow it loves to lave so well;
Mountains swell round like giants, there
They shoot their far blue crests, beneath
Amid the shaggy robes they wear
The swathing mist racks wildly wreathe,
While far, far down the dwarfed woods stand,
In shade and sunshine o'er the land.

A moment muse, does not yon height
Seem like some elder son of fame,
Towering aloft, where living light
Sheds cloudless splendor on his name?
Are not those forms in misty maze,
Proud souls yet in the storms of time,
Struggling to catch some glorious rays,
To light the darkling path they climb?
While yon secluded vales express,
Thy bowers, domestic happiness!

Again I dream, see far displayed,
How calm the golden ripples lie;
Now giving back our sails in shade,
Now blue with the o'erhanging sky;
Now comes the wind, each warrior wave
Flings his white war-cap on the breeze,

And rears his storm steed, free and brave,
And onward to the battle flees,
Tosses his little life away,
And leaves a foam, 'tis glory's play.

Again, again 'tis night, and I
Am wafting sadly to my home;
Sad as the last star in the sky,
Sad as the last wave's lonely foam,
And there are all I leave behind,
The loved, the worshipped, and the lost,
The hours have winged me like the wind,
A spray upon joy's billow tost;
Those sunny hours have sped their last,
And leave me here to mourn the past.

Yet why lament, I came, I go,
'Tis all that life's long toil can give,
It can but fleeting bliss bestow,
I loved, I left, is all we live;
Away with such vain thoughts, this world
Is a proud race, and I would win,
Yet lady, on life's tempest hurled,
Or home's sweet shelter house within;
Amid these scenes shall memory be,
And half her torch be lit by thee.

LOOK ALOFT.

THE following lines are founded upon the little story said to have been related by the late Dr. GODMAN, of the ship boy, who was about to fall from the rigging, and was only saved by the mate's impressive exclamation, "look aloft, you lubber!"

IN the tempest of life, when the wave and the gale
Are around and above, if thy footing should fail,
If thine eye should grow dim, and thy caution depart,
"Look aloft!" and be firm, and be fearless of heart.

If the friend who embraced in prosperity's glow,
With a smile for each joy, and a tear for each woe,
Should betray thee, when sorrows like clouds are arrayed,
"Look aloft" to the friendship which never shall fade.

Should the visions which hope spreads in light to thine eye,
Like the tints of the rainbow, but brighten to fly,
Then turn, and through tears of repentant regret,
"Look aloft" to the sun that is never to set.

Should they who are dearest, the son of thy heart,
The wife of thy bosom in sorrow depart,
"Look aloft" from the darkness and dust of the tomb,
To that soil where affection is ever in bloom.

And oh, when death comes in his terrors to cast,
His fears on the future, his pall on the past,
In that moment of darkness, with hope in thy heart,
And a smile in thine eye, "look aloft" and depart.

M DCCC XXX.

MORNING MUSINGS AMONG THE HILLS.

THE Morn! the Morn! this mountain breeze,
How pure it seems, from earth how free;
What sweet and sad moralities
Breathe from this air that comes to me.

Look down my spirit, see below,
Earth darkly sleeps where shades prevail,
Or wakes to tears, that vainly flow,
Or dreams of hopes that surely fail.

Why shouldst thou linger there, and burn
With passions like these fools of time;
Unfold thy wings, their follies spurn,
And soar to yon eternal clime.

Look round, my spirit! to these hills
The earliest sunlight lends its ray,
Morning's pure air these far heights fills,
Here evening holiest steals away.

Thus when with firm-resolving breast,
  Though bound to earth thou livest on high,
Shalt thou with earlier light be blest,
  More purely live, more calmly die.

This darkling dawn doth it not bring
  Visions of former glory back,
Arouse my spirit, plume thy wing,
  And soar with me on holier track.

Canst thou not with unclouded eye
  And fancy rapt, the scene survey
When darkness bade its shadows fly,
  And earth rose glorious into day.

Canst thou not see that earth, its spring
  Unfaded yet by death or crime,
In freshest green yet mellowing,
  Into the gorgeous autumn's prime.

Dost thou not see the eternal choir,
  Light on each peak that woos the sky,
Fold their broad wings of golden fire,
  And string their seraph minstrelsy.

Then what sublimest music filled,
  Rejoicing heaven and rising earth,

When angel harps the chorus swelled,
And stars hymned forth creation's birth.

See how the sun comes proudly on
His glorious march ! before our sight
The swathing mists, their errand done,
Are melting into morning light.

He tips the peak, its dark clouds fly,
He walks its sides, and shades retreat,
He pours his flood of radiancy
On streams and lowlands at its feet.

LORD ! let thy rays thus pierce, illume
Each dim recess within my heart ;
From its deep darkness chase all gloom,
And to its weakness strength impart.

Thus let thy light upon me rise,
Here let my home forever be ;
Far above earth, its toys and ties,
Yet humbly kneeling, LORD, to thee !

M DCCC XXXI.

ELEGY ON AFRIC.

A FAVORITE DOG OF A FRIEND.

"In his duty prompt at every call,
He watched." DESERTED VILLAGE.

FAREWELL, farewell, we think of thee,
At each familiar step we trace,
We miss thy mirth so full of glee,
Thy bounding form of life and grace.

We miss thine eye, whose look conveyed
A welcome in each wistful glance,
And bright with almost thought, portrayed
A soul within thy countenance.

We miss thy wakeful bark, when dawn
Roused thee to hail the rising sun;
We miss thine evening bay long drawn,
As wailing that the day was done.

No more shall thine expressive fawn,
Mute, pleading, eloquent, be tried,

Not all in vain to scour the lawn,
Or gambol at thy master's side.

No more, no more, shalt thou be found,
In form beneath thy favorite tree;
Still, still, it sheds sweet shade around,
But never more to shelter thee.

Thy little playmates look for thee,
With asking gaze, and lisp thy name,
For thou wast glad to join their glee,
And at their call familiar came.

Ah, now those tiny fingers press
Thy form, and hug thy neck no more;
Nor shout, nor call, nor kind caress,
Can thine accustomed face restore.

We saw that form so slowly waste,
We heard thy low complaining moan;
We saw thine eye grow dim, yet haste
To answer to each kindly tone.

Yet, Afric! as we think of thee,
So faithful in thine humble lot,
We spurn thee not from memory,
We loved thee, and forget thee not.

TO ——

ON THE DEATH OF A FAVORITE BIRD.

Alas, sweet cousin, how can I
  In harsh discordant rhyme rehearse,
His sweet, sweet song whose melody,
  Had charms beyond the reach of verse?

Ah, I should need his tuneful art,
  His tone with more than music rife,
In fitting numbers to impart,
  The tale of his harmonious life.

And yet that tale how shortly told,
  One feast of flowers, one ceaseless strain;
At morn to plume, at eve to fold
  His wings, to feed and sleep again.

A simple life of joyance his,
  A life of song, no care had he,
Except perchance thy glance to miss,
  And in sad silence pine for thee.

Blest in thy smile of sunshine given,
His pinions sought no softer sky;
Happy to find his loveliest heaven,
In the blue beauty of thine eye.

And basking in that smile so bright,
He had no wish his wings to free;
Found in its beam his full delight,
And loved his sweet captivity.

But ah, that eye, that joyous voice,
No more his dreamy sleep shall break;
No more his little heart rejoice,
Nor songs of warbling welcome wake.

In vain spring woos with balmy breath,
And bears sweet music on her wings;
The fine quick ear is dull in death,
The answering throat no longer sings.

His lonely mate has lost her cheer,
Or if to song her bosom stir;
Fixes her tiny head to hear,
The note that ne'er shall answer her.

That note which hailed thee to the last,
And called thee to his cage to see,

That he was happy, thus to cast
His last, last lingering look on thee.

Then since forever hushed his strain,
Lay him in fitting grave to sleep,
Where spring's soft dews and summer's rain,
With gentle tears his death may weep.

There let the first soft sunbeam fling,
A fresher green o'er all the ground;
There the first lonely wild flower spring,
And shed its sweetest fragrance round.

Thither let each fond bird repair,
At music's grave its vows to pay,
Or doomed to die, seek refuge there.
And swan-like sing its soul away.

M DCCC XXXII.

HYMN

WRITTEN DURING THE PREVALENCE OF THE CHOLERA.

LORD! while the wasting evil still
  Walks on in its mysterious path,
The worker of thine awful will,
  The scourge of thine awakened wrath.

Humbled in heart, low in the dust,
  We conscious kiss the avenging rod;
Confess thy judgment ever just,
  And trembling, own that thou art God.

Yet, LORD! wilt thou forever smite,
  Once more dread father, yet once more
Lift to thy suffering people's sight,
  Thy healing signal as of yore.

No offering meet, have we to make,
  No works, no rights, no self-proud plea;

Mercy we beg, free for his sake
Who died for us to reign with thee.

Then shall we sing, thy pardon won,
That union how sublimely sweet,
When in the Father and the Son,
Thy justice and thy mercy meet.

M DCCC XXXII.

LINES

WRITTEN IN THE ALBUM OF A VERY YOUNG LADY.

SWEET Lilly, you know I am wedded
To a ruthless and barbarous lore,
Which all poets from instinct have dreaded,
And the muses devoutly abhor;
And they, like their lovely relations,
Who our poetry make here below,
Are rather averse from flirtations
With men who are married, you know.

Yet no matter, my promise is plighted,
And though they wont smile on my need,
I shall think all their frowning requited,
Should you take but "the will for the deed;"
Besides I fear jilting their trade is,
And they 're tyrants, so I shall not choose
To trust the caprice of these ladies,
But take you, my dear girl, for my muse.

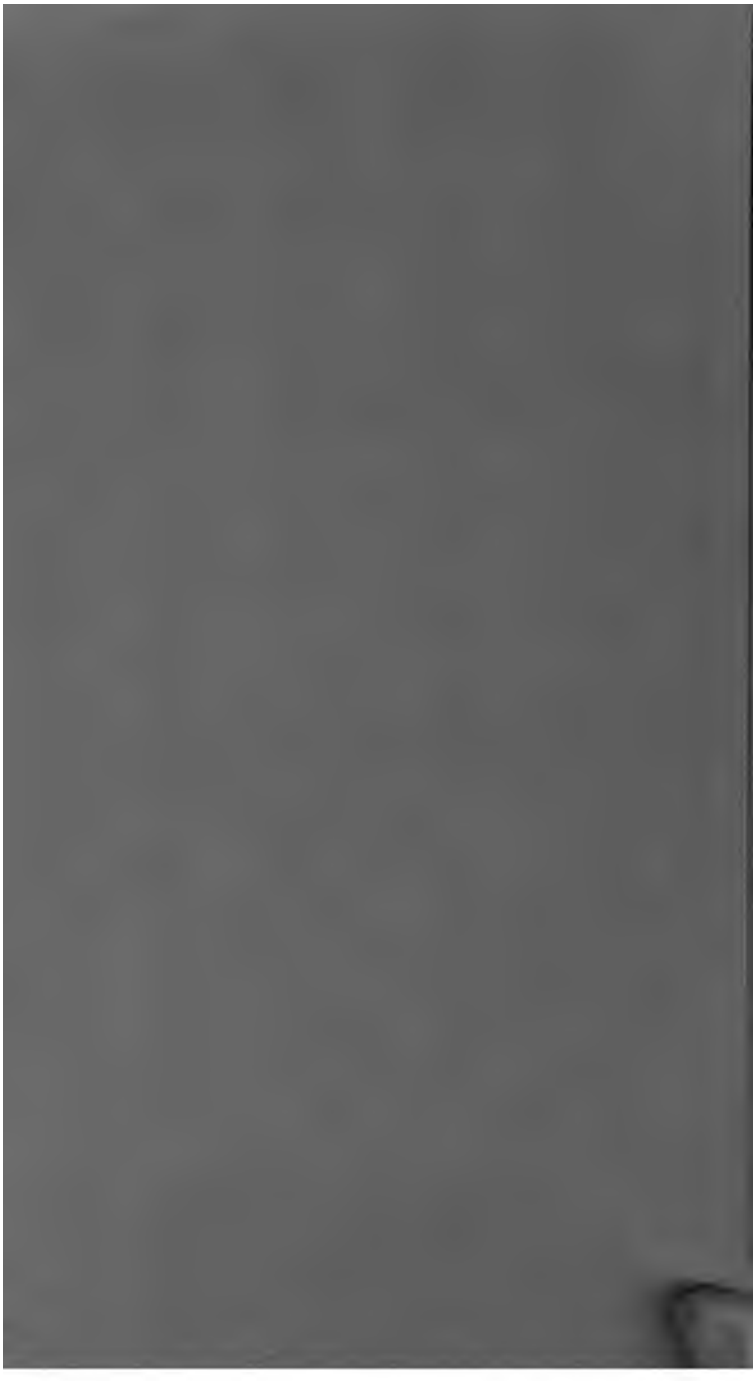
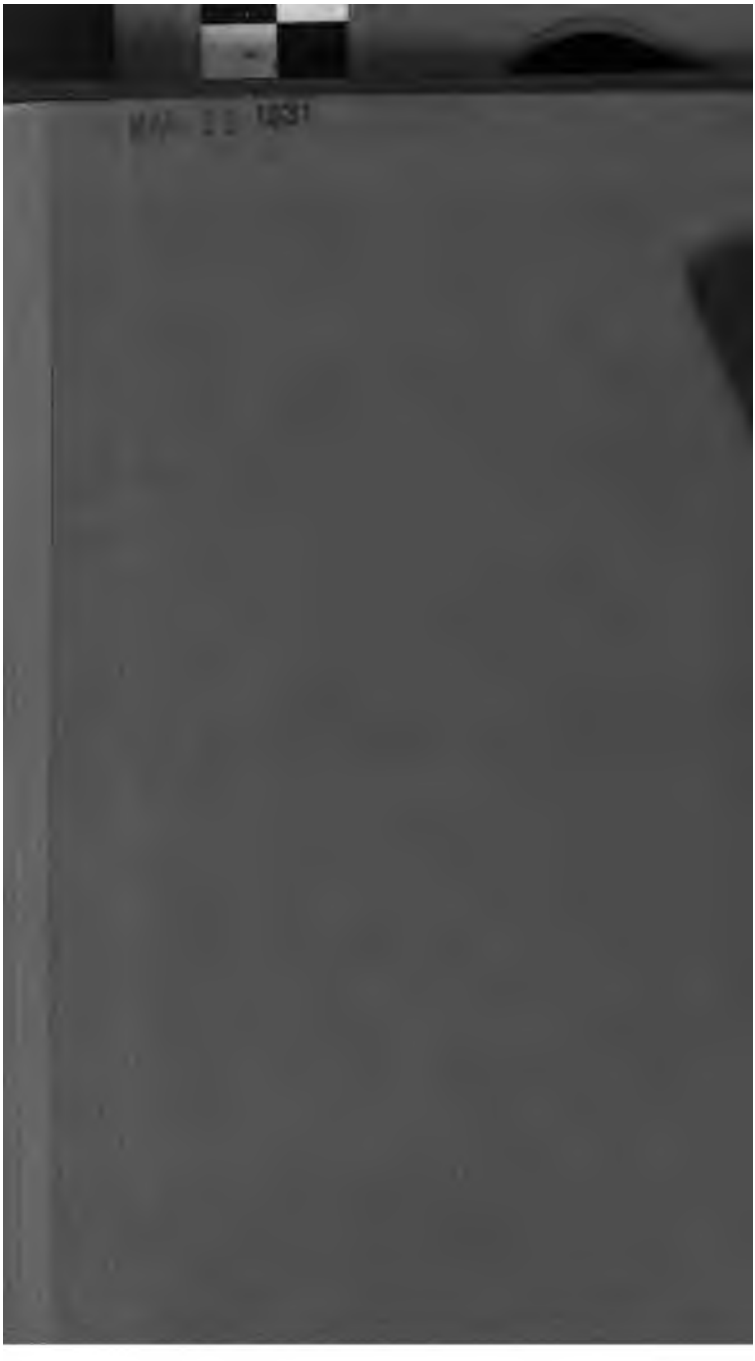
And now then, my sweet inspiration!
What fond prayer shall friendship put up?
What blessings of wealth, love, and station,
Shall I pray, may o'erflow in your cup?
Shall I wish you those graces, so winning
Their way to our innermost heart,
That we find there love's empire beginning,
Ere friendship is warned to depart?

I would wish that your sky in life's morning,
May be fair as a morn in sweet June,
That each scene with fresh verdure adorning,
Warm, cloudless, and bright be its noon;
And as calmly and tenderly shining,
As the autumn sun dies in the west,
Be your evening of age, as declining,
It sinks slowly at night to its rest.

All these do I wish you, yet, Lilly,
I dare not thus cease this poor rhyme,
For I fear I should wish for you illy,
Did I ask but the mere gifts of time;
What's beauty? why wish you to win it?
That eye, and that lip, and that brow,
Were yesterday beauty, but in it
The reptile is revelling now.

And wit, with its meteor flashes;
How dazzles it but to decay!
Can you find its quick flame in those ashes?
Can you call back its voice to that clay?
Yes, all idly my prayer had ascended,
If one word in that prayer were forgot,
In whose compass all blessings are blended,
That friendship could wish for your lot.

That word is religion; fools flout it,
And tell us 'tis nonsense and stuff,
But believe me, dear girl, that without it,
This world will be bitter enough;
And with it all joy will be heightened,
And holier all friendship and love,
And the darkness of sorrow be brightened,
With a ray that beams but from above.

And in death, be it late ere you 've found it,
It will make your couch prouder than kings',
For the angels of heaven shall surround it,
With the radiance and rush of their wings;
Yes, safe will it guide you, if granted,
Through earth's changes, and sorrows, and strife,
Till a tree in God's paradise planted,
You bloom by the river of life.

M DCCC XXXIII.